

Tales of magic

In Japan and Norway

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of Candidata Philologiae
in Cultural History
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**23rd of April 2007
University of Oslo**

Abstract

Fairytales are universal expressions that have been used in the nation-building process in both Norway and Japan. I have posed these questions; in what sense are they universal, and how have they been used. My hypothesis is that fairytales contain universal elements connected to the universality of myth, at the same time as they are marked by time, place and customs in the area they are found. I have three Japanese fairytales that I have compared with three Norwegian fairytales with the same AT-number. The fairytales are:

AT 302: Momotaro, the Peach Boy and The ogre's (devil's) heart in the egg

AT 425: Issun Boshi, One-Inch Boy and East of the sun West of the moon.

AT 475: Urashima Taro and Friends in life and death.

I have analyzed the fairytales in pairs as shown above. I have used Vladimir Propp's 31 functions to break the tales into components and then I have used different key words to reveal different layers in the stories. Through structure and action, I have looked at the first layer in the fairytales that is connected to the similarities and the universality. The next layer is in between similarities and differences, and I have used the key word symbol images. The last layer is connected to differences and cultural references and the key words here are characters and their attributes. I have used the comparison to shed light on the similarities and differences, and then I have looked at how the Japanese fairytales have been used in the nation-building process in Japan in the Meiji-period through the key words identity and moral.

The analysis shows that there are many similarities between the Norwegian and Japanese fairytales. These similarities are connected to the fairytales as a universal genre; they are connected to myths and a certain kind of moral that is visible through the abstract style of the fairytale. The symbols highlights some of the aspects with connections to the past, that were valuable in the nationbuilding process, as well as showing a link between the fairytale landscape and the landscape of dreams. The cultural references are the most important part of the fairytales in connection to the nation-building process: the cultural characteristics together with the moral in the stories, were among the elements which were used to create national identity in Norway and Japan.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to:

My supervisors at the Department for Cultural studies and Oriental languages: Bjarne Hodne and Reiko Abe Auestad.

For great inspiration and help:

Balder Bryn Morsund, Cecilie Desiree Widtsteen, Morten Bachke, Erle Bryn, Morten Joakim Vatn, Kathleen Marchant and Berit Øraker.

Thanks to the The Scandinavia-Japan Sasakawa Foundation for economical support for my journey to Japan.

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Foreword

In this work I have combined two interests, my fascination of fairytales, and my curiosity about Japanese culture. In a bookshop in London, I found the book Japanese folktales by Royall Tyler and that was where the idea was born. From my childhood I have many memories of Norwegian folktales by Asbjørnsen and Moe, and the book Japanese folktales made me truly curious about what the Japanese folktales would be like.

Apart from the childhood experience of fairytales, my interest awakened anew when I first heard about how it was a universal genre, that fairytales with similar narrative structure and similar topics (almost identical stories) existed all over the world. I was intrigued by how this could be, and that was one of the reasons I started to study folklore at the University of Oslo.

Fairytales originally belong to an oral tradition with their roots in a long gone past. Many different influences of time, place and history have marked the fairytales throughout the years and of course the process of collecting and publishing the stories have changed them a lot. This last change, from oral to published material is connected to the creation of a modern nation in Japan and in Norway. The basis of the identity-process was to create a feeling of being part of a group (Japanese and Norwegian), and to make that possible a big ideological process took place.

...the people must also be influenced, their hearts and minds made one.¹

The fairytales were a part of the quest to create and define identity, and to build links to the past that could legitimate the idea of typical national values, connected to nativism and historical lines to a glorified past.

The most interesting part here is how a universal genre such as the fairy tale has been used to create national myths.

A major work of studying the fairy tale as a universal genre have been done by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson in the *The Types of the Folktale*, published in 1961. They created the system of AT-numbers where the fairytales are thematically arranged after the content and motives in the stories.

My work consists of the comparison of three Japanese tales with three Norwegian tales with the same AT-numbers. Another important aspect of the comparison is how the fairytales are

¹ (Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths* 1985. Page 3)

collected and published, and I have found that Yanagita Kunio and Keigo Seki have worked with similar folkloristic methods as Peder Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe.

(Royall Tyler's folktales have a different origin and could not be used for comparison, even though the book was the beginning of it all.)

Oslo, 25th February 2007, Tiril Bryn

Question

Fairytales are universal expressions that have been used in the nation-building process in both Japan and Norway. In what sense are they universal and how have they been used?

Hypothesis

The fairy tales contain universal elements connected to the universality of myth, at the same time as they are marked by time, place and customs in the area they are found.

Before I start the analysis of the six fairytales, I will take a closer look at the collectors and publishers of the fairytales and the cultural-historical context of this process. In the analysis, I will use the Norwegian stories to show both the similarities and differences from the Japanese fairytales, but I will only look at the Japanese text in the light of the use in the ideology process.

When it comes to the use of the Norwegian texts, I have a short presentation of Ørnulf Hodne's doctorate on Jørgen Moe and the way he was working in the process of publishing the original oral material. The work shows how moral was a central part of the elements that were made stronger in the publishing process and considered an important element in creating a national identity.

The textanalysis has four parts. The first part is to compare the fairy tales looking for similarities and universality. Among other things, the plot, motive and structure of the stories represent universality.

The second part is connected to the fact that symbolic images in the stories that can refer both to universal elements and cultural differences. As part of a universal interpretation, they also connect the fairytales to the myth, understood as explanations of different world-views.

The third part is concerned with how differences that can be elements in the texts are connected to landscape, customs or historical evidences. These differences are connected with the

characters and their attributes, and are part of what gives the stories colour and characteristics. This is in opposition to the universal elements that are linked to the underlying narrative structure. The duality of the fairy tales is connected with how they are at the same time universal and strongly influenced by local customs and manners.

“In its various modes and its different versions, the folktale expresses not only a variety of universal human needs and attitudes but also a living diversity of epochs, nationalities, landscapes, social strata, and personalities.”²

The fourth part of the question is what sense the fairy tales have been used in the creation of national identity in the Japan.

One similarity between the Norwegian and the Japanese fairytales is the fact that the fairy tales have been used as a part of the identity-process, another similarity is that the fairytales contain a certain moral, and a language full of symbols. Fairy tales are connected to myths and they have links to the past. This connection to the past was re-used in a new context, in the creation of modern myths, for the purpose of building an industrial society and a modern civilization.

“The glass beads of the folktale mirror the world.”³

Definition of fairy tales

The Norwegian word for fairytale or folktale is eventyr from the latin word aventura which means adventure (in Norwegian: under-full opplevelse, an experience of wonder). In Japanese Fairy tales are called Mukashi banashi and that means once-upon-a-time story.

In my thesis the word fairytales is to be understood as tales of magic as it is categorized within Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson's classification system, the AT collection of Fairy tales from all over the world.

The three definitions of the stories I'm going to use will be either fairytales, tales of magic or folktales. All of the six stories I have chosen are under the category: Tales of magic. (In Norwegian: Undereventyr, number 300-749). Another description is tales of wonder. Max Lüthi uses the word folktale or the term "narrative of adventures".

² (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 125)

³ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 80)

” ...the term ”narrative of adventures” at the same time encompasses the protagonist, the human hero who sets out journeying from home and reacts to, and comes in terms with whatever he encounters.”⁴

The fairy tales I’m working with are from an oral tradition. It’s poetry that has its starting point in the real world, but often contains supernatural and fantastic events beyond the limits of reason. The language of the fairy tales is a symbolic language, and when the hero starts his journey into the unknown, the laws of reason are exchanged with the laws of magic. These laws are examined in Max Lüthi’s *The Folktale*, form and nature and I will write more about this in the chapter about Vladimir Propp and Max Lüthi.

Material

The fairytales

1. Momotaro, The Peach boy
AT 302 Keigo Seki

2. One inch boy (Issunboshi)
AT 425 Yanagita Kunio

3. Urashima Taro (Dragon Palace)
AT 470 Keigo Seki

1. The ogre’s (devil’s) heart in the egg
(Risen som ikke hadde noe hjerte på seg)
AT 302 Asbjørnsen and Moe

2. The search for the lost husband
(Østenfor sol og vestenfor måne),
AT 425 Asbjørnsen and Moe

3. Friends in life and death
AT 470 Asbjørnsen and Moe

⁴ (Max Lüthi. *The European Folktale*, Form and Nature 1982. Side123)

Presentation of the Collectors and the period when the fairy tales were collected.

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe

Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe were the collectors and publishers of the famous collection of Norwegian folktales that was first published in 1852. They were inspired by contemporary ideas and strongly influenced by the Romantic view upon the peasant culture, that flourished under the period of industrialization, where big changes in the society took place. Of course the The Grimm-brothers work of collecting folktales in Germany was an important inspiration.

It was in 1837 Asbjørnsen and Moe started to collect folktales among the peasants in Norway.

“Moe’s motivation for the journeys was the romantic longing for the people. It was in remote mountain- and fjord villages east of the mountains, where the new time not had influenced and ruined the original lifeform, he searched for storytellers and their tradition.”⁵

Jørgen Moe was both a poet and a folklore specialist, and he considered the folkculture to be full of poetic traditions that needed to be released. In his own childhood, he experienced the oral storytelling tradition. The traditional storytellers were often poor people, men or women, and often they were not the most beautiful in appearance.

“The motivation was to dive in to the life of ordinary people and release and bring back again the treasures of poetry that they own. (This is meant as a statement both from the poet and the folklore specialist Jørgen Moe.)”⁶

At this time there existed a political quest to find a Norwegian identity that could give legitimacy to independency for Norway. What was the strongest element in Norwegian culture?

⁵ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 47)

⁶ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 235)

During the 300 years under Danish rule, not much elite culture had been developed in Norway. An example which illustrates the situation quite well is that there was not built one institutional building in Norway during these years. In Norway there are institutional buildings from medieval times and buildings from the 17th century.

The written language was Danish and the University was situated in Denmark. What the Norwegians had, apart from small elite groups in the cities was an outstretched country with peasants living an independent life far from the government.

“Before the national culture in Norway was established, no shared culture existed, only regional subcultures connected to different social layers in cities and villages.”⁷

*“In the work with creating a Norwegian national culture and a Norwegian identity, scientists and artists searched back to the life form of the peasant people and from that they picked cultural elements that carried values that were seen as valuable in the building of the national state. The chosen elements were made national by a process done by an elite that to very little extent had their roots in the peasant society.”*⁸

The process was driven by contemporary ideology. Certain geographical areas of the country and special groups of the people were chosen for the collecting of tales. The tales had certain characteristics, and through an ideological process the publisher made these characteristics stronger.

It was also important to define the difference between Norwegian and Danish culture according to what was the true ‘Norwegian spirit’.

An example of this is how a Norwegian painter named Erik Werenskiöld is defending a Norwegian illustrator (Teodor Kittelsen) who is criticized for his illustration of Norwegian Trolls by saying:

“They (the Danish artists) lack the courage and fresh temper that is the strength of the fairytales and which is the strength of our people.”⁹

⁷ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 15)

⁸ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995 . Page 128)

⁹ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 93)

The quote illustrates a wish to show that there is a great difference in spirit or national character between Denmark and Norway.

In the aim of creating we-stories, stories of 'who we are' connected to the nation, the past was important. As the elite who was a minor group in the society, choose elements from the peasant culture to create something new, it was only parts of the peasants's culture that was used.

It was not the peasant culture as a lifeform that was interesting, but the elements in this lifeform that carried the cultural continuity.

The elements chosen from the peasant culture can be summed up as:

- 1.Values
- 2.Believes
- 3.Behaviour
- 4.Poetry

In contrast to the modern industrialized society, the life of the farmer has closer connections to the cycle of the year, and many magical actions are connected to that cycle, as well as to the cycle of life.

Asbjørnsen and Moe were not the only ones who were collecting stories or searching for elements in the peasant culture. There were many other folklorists, among them was Sophus Bugge. In Hodne's description from his book, Norsk nasjonalkultur, (Norwegian national culture):

Sophus Bugge was as he says; driven by 'the audacious conviction that my work, how simple it may be, yet belong to our times great deeds: from the lifewell of the past to scoop strength and vigour for the future.' The national program for collection can hardly be explained more clearly. It was, for Bugge as well, important to show the cultural-historical connections between the folk-poetry and the Norse culture.

The roots were documented and it was the farmer who carried the culture.¹⁰

10 (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995 . Side 55)

*Roots of 'Norwegian-ness' were searched for, and were found. The collected material documented that the Norwegian farmer had its own culture. It was carried by generations and had, in many cases when it comes to theme and motive, it's roots in a period of time when Norway was a superpower, both culturally and politically. Through the collection, the bearing parts of the national romantic ideas was confirmed.*¹¹

Inspiration for artists

“...but the most important effect of the collection of tradition and the publishing work probably lies in the source- and foundation for inspiration it represented for contemporary and future artists, within both litterature and visual art.”¹²

The folktales themselves turned into popular literature, and quickly gained the position as identifying the essence of Norwegian-ness, and folk-culture in general was a great inspiration for the most famous of Norwegian artist, painters, musicians, authors and others of that time. (Edvard Grieg, Henrik Ibsen, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson etc.)

The use of the folk-culture created a strong Norwegian identity based on the cultural and political use of it. This identity is in many ways still alive today, even though the famous folk-culture characters are somehow frozen in the times of the Romantics. They are still part of our collective memory, but they are not used in contemporary art anymore, at least not to any important extent. The parts of the folk-culture still alive are more the ideas of it. Many people find for instance the Ash Lad and his values typical Norwegian characteristics.

Norway got its own constitutional law in 1814, and in 1905 independency from Sweden. The fight for independency and the idea of the Norwegian-ness won through, and makes up the foundation of the Norwegian society of today.

¹¹ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995 . Side 57)

¹² (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 57)

Yanagita Kunio and Keigo Seki

One of the strong characteristics of the Japanese society is that until 1868 Japan was a feudal society, with limited contact with the outside world. During the Edo period (1600-1868) and earlier, the traditional arts of Zen, samurai's and tea ceremony was developed and cultivated by the aristocracy and the samurai class. The feudal structure in the political system lasted until the Meiji period started in 1868. After the Americans forced the Japanese to open their gates for trading, an intense modernization of the country took place. The Japanese adopted the Western industrialization model and created a modern nation within an extremely short period of time. The word Meiji means enlightenment and in many ways, the industrialization and all the structures that followed was placed on top of the traditions developed through hundreds of years. This melting between the old traditions and the industrialization created a modern Japan where the history of the past was very different from European medieval development, and pretty similar in the future business organization. Among the adopted sciences was the folklore science. According to Richard M. Dorson in the article Bridges between American and Japanese folklore, Japan is the only Asian country that has developed a mature science in folklore.

He writes that: "During the ferment period of the Meiji-Restoration, folklore theory found a place among the array of arts and science the Japanese imported overnight to transform the Land of the Rising sun into a modern nation-state." He also writes that:

"Modern Japan emerged only with Meiji Restoration of 1868, and her traditions tenaciously rooted in a living folk culture."¹³

Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962) is called the founding father of Japanese folklore. He started a movement collecting folktales and led it for more than 50 years. The collection of folktales in a folkloristic tradition started about a hundred years later than the Grimm-brother's work in Germany. Traditional tales have been collected in Japan as far back as the eighth century in Kojiki and Nihongi, but Yanagita Kunio first established the folklore-tradition and collected tales within that tradition. Handbook of Folklore by Charlotte Burne inspired Kunio from 1913, and the book was translated to Japanese in 1927.

¹³ (Keigo Seki Folktales of Japan 1969. Foreword by Dorson page xii)

Similar to Asbjørnsen and Moe's work, Yanagita Kunio and Keigo Seki were also searching for folktales that had deep roots among the peasants and carried links to a long gone past and old mythical worldviews.

“Yanagita together with Keigo Seki and others sought out elderly narrators of little education, persons most likely to have escaped the influence of literary sources. In most cases they were rice farmers, deep-sea fishermen, and their wives, resident in remote villages.”¹⁴

The story of ordinary people.

From the strict class regulated feudal system, a new identity took place, where all layers of the society were to identify with the nation, and where the poetic culture of the peasant was one of the links to the past. The idea of native-ness and ur-identity has an excluding aspect, where other native groups were seen as less valuable, such as the Ainu people in Japan, and the lapps in Norway. This kind of exclusion will not be investigated in my work. My focus will lie on why and how the folktales were used to create links to the past.

In the article “A “postcolonial” look at Kunio Yanagida”, the founding father of Japanese Folklore studies, Mikako Iwatake discusses the Japanese folklore studies with regard to the social knowledge it has constructed; how it has created an image of historical continuity for a national unity founded upon selected and exclusive membership: how it has supported the modern imperial ideology while presenting itself as

“the study of ordinary people whose history has never been recorded “

She also writes about the importance of emphasizing the uniqueness of the Japanese, which was to find a cultural identity different from other influences, like the Chinese or the Western identity:

¹⁴ (Keigo Seki Folktales of Japan 1969. Foreword by Dorson page viii)

“The general tendency until recently has been to underline the uniqueness of Japanese folklore, which should therefore be kept separate from other kinds of folklore elsewhere”.¹⁵

In her article she refers to the American folklorist Richard Dorson, who place Japanese folklore studies in the category of Historical-Reconstructural.

He writes, Kunio Yanagita (...) sought to recapitulate the ancient Japanese animistic religion. Through observations of extant harvest festivals, agricultural rituals, household magic, burial and marriage customs, and narratives of degenerated deities, Yanagita and his disciples endeavored to peel off the later historical accretions of imported Buddhism and official Shintoism to arrive at the earlier core of cosmological beliefs.¹⁶

The work with creating a national identity was connected to using elements that belonged to a folk-group, as customs, manners, poetry etc., but the elements to use were by no means chosen by chance. As in Norway, where it was important to prove that the Norwegian culture were different from the Danish culture, in Japan, it was important to mark a distance to Chinese and Western culture.

“I hope to show that philological ideas applied in Japan as elsewhere, were used to construct a politically desirable cultural relationship with selected pasts people and places.”¹⁷

Selected pasts and people are key words here. Among the multitude of cultural expressions that flourish throughout a country, a choice was made to search for elements that could emphasize an essential ur-form of something Japanese.

“The idea that the goal of Japanese folklore studies is to get at the Japanese esunoso (ethnos) or the ur-form of something essentially Japanese through the comparative method bears the marks of Herderian and Grimmian folklore approaches”.¹⁸

The folktales originally existed as an oral tradition among peasant living in close contact with the forces of nature. This might be called a point where the folktales are both universal and cultural expressions.

¹⁵ (Mikado Iwatake, Folklore, Heritage Politics and Ethnic Diversity. Page 207)

¹⁶ (Mikado Iwatake, Folklore, Heritage Politics and Ethnic Diversity. Page 207)

¹⁷ (Mikado Iwatake, Folklore, Heritage Politics and Ethnic Diversity. Page 207)

¹⁸ (Mikado Iwatake, Folklore, Heritage Politics and Ethnic Diversity. Page 209)

AT - numbers

In 1950 Hiroko Ikeda started to classify the Japanese folktales according to the Aa Th Type Index. Hiroko Ikeda, who was first trained by Yanagita Kunio, then crossed the pacific to take a doctorate at Indiana University with Stith Thompson. She was also a colleague of Keigo Seki at the institute of Japanese Folklore.

Aarne and Thompson classification system are also the pattern for the Norwegian catalogue of folktales, first published by Reidar Th. Christiansen in 1921 and the later version, *The Types of the Norwegian Folktale* by Ørnulf Hodne, published in 1984.

Method

I have chosen Vladimir Propp's functions from the *Morphology of the folktale* as tools for comparing stories from the two countries. By structuralizing the stories according to the functions, Propp's theory is like a method underneath the main method, which is comparison. By analyzing the stories with Propp's functions it may be possible to find the similarities and highlight the universal aspects of the fairy tales. Through the highlighting of the similarities, the differences will also become visible. The differences show regional and cultural aspects. By the results of the comparison I hope to show the duality in the Fairy tales, that they are both universal and carry elements of cultural continuity connected with the time and place where and when they were collected.

Comparison and definitions of “culture” and “nationalism”

I have chosen my material on the basis of the similarities, but the comparison will also shed light on the differences. By placing the stories side by side I hope to see both the similarities and the concepts of contrasts.

“It is only thanks to comparison that we are able to see what is not there, in other words to understand the significance of a particular absence.”¹⁹

In the hypothesis there are two important terms: Universal elements and cultural aspects. Universal elements are connected to the universality of the genre and to the

¹⁹ (Peter Burke *History and Social Theory* 1992. Side 23)

universality of basic emotions such as love, hate, fear, jealousy etc. Another example can be the dichotomy between good and evil or true or untrue, etc.

As the message or 'moral' of the fairy tale is connected to parables, knowledge that is not necessarily grasped by logic, they are connected with the myths, understood as ways to describe and understand the inexplicable. Myths can be described as timeless expressions of the imagination – or as a continuous creative process of making sense of the universe.

By cultural aspects, the most important now is the use of the term according to comparison. First, what is culture?

From an article by Knut Kjeldstadli, National cultures. Do they exist? Can they be studied? (My translation) Kjeldstadli defines culture as art, civilizations and collective patterns of meaning. He also writes (among a multitude of definitions) that culture is about ideas, terms, norms, values and emotions.

When it comes to National cultures he writes: “Attemptively sketching a term about culture as patterns of meaning that is communicated and shared by a collective that has a certain extent, but has unsharp boundaries towards the world, patterns of meanings that have a certain constancy, but are changeable.”²⁰

The quote above shows the feeble size of national culture, as both constant and changeable, without sharp borders to the rest of the world, still shared by a collective. The key phrase here being “patterns of meaning”. The phrase includes all kinds of levels of information, but also shared history and shared stories, culture and art. Within that pattern of meaning, the fairytales and their characters exist as items known to the collective.

The way the fairytales themselves have been used to create identity and the way all the people in a nation have been taught the stories among other things in school, makes them a part of a collective memory in the respective country. In Kjeldstadli's opinion;

“Cognition comes by comparison.”²¹

He also writes that we constantly compare things, not necessarily consciously, but by relating to things that are familiar, we identify differences. The similarities in the fairytales will make it possible to identify the differences.

²⁰ Kjeldstadli, Knut Nasjonale kulturer. Finnes de? Kan de studeres? 1999. Page 52)

²¹ (Kjeldstadli, Knut Nasjonale kulturer. Finnes de? Kan de studeres? 1999. Page 78)

“We can point out a nation’s characteristics: it can become visible through comparison with another nation.”²²

The items in my comparison are the four folktales from each country. One may say the Fairy tales are like windows, and by looking through those windows, a glimpse of two different cultures come through. The window also has a historical colour, the colour of the nation-building process where the collecting of the folktales took place.

Nations are constructions created by human beings, but they are real because they have been created, just like someone has drawn the drawings of a building and constructed it afterwards. They exist. The foundation of the idea of the nation is connected to the idea that folk groups with certain characteristics can constitute a nation.

“National identity is an identity that can be called a we-identity, and this identity is not given by nature, it is constructed. But what is created is there, and has real existence. An elite, artists politicians and others, have offered a national identity, but they couldn’t take it from thin air. What they offered had to have resonance among the population.”²³

What was offered was a national identity. Identity implies an experience of knowing who you are. In this ideological connection, it means knowing who you are according to the nation, to being Japanese or Norwegian. The identity of the folkgroup is found, adjusted, and recreated to as part of a political construction that is called a national state.

The frame is a tool that can generate politics and an industrial society and it is important that every inhabitant of the nation is relating to the national state, that it is experienced as a part of everyone’s identity, to function. In this combination of modern industrialization and modern mythmaking, the fairy tales were collected and published.

The two nations are compared to each other through the fairytales that were used in the identity-building process. The fairytales were used in creating identity and became part of a collective memory.

Anthony D. Smith is among other thing defining nationalism as the use of the past in the present.

²² (Kjeldstadli, Knut Nasjonale kulturer. Finnes de? Kan de studeres? 1999. Page77)

²³ (Kjeldstadli, Knut Nasjonale uklturer. Finnes de? Kan de studeres? 1999. Page: 57)

"Perhaps the central question in our understanding of nationalism is the role of the past in the creation of the present"²⁴

It is a convergence between the experience of the nation as a construction and the experience of a nation given by nature.

"For nationalists themselves, the role of the past is clear and unproblematic. The nation was always there, indeed it is part of the natural order, even when it was submerged in the hearts of its members. The task of the nationalist is simply to remind his or her compatriots of their glorious past, so that they can recreate and relive those glories."

He also describes the relation to the past as a two-way relationship between nationalist present and ethnic past as an explosive energy.

"In this continually renewed two-way relationship between ethnic past and nationalist present lies the secret of the nation's explosive energy and the awful power it exerts over its members."

Vladimir Propp and Max Lüthi

Lüthi writes that the goal for his book *The European Folktale, Form and Nature*, is to establish the essential laws of the genre. He has divided the laws into five different chapters. These are called One-dimensionality, Depthlessness, Abstract style, Isolation and Universal Interconnection and the last one, Sublimation and All-Inclusiveness. Lüthi writes that the message, structure and style as the key to understanding the secret of the folktale.

"They speak to all kinds of people and to widely separated generations; they speak in terms that sometime differ and yet in many ways remain the same. Only a small part of the secret and the fascination of folktales can be grasped by research into the present-day context of their performance or by reconstruction of the context of their performance in days past. This secret of the folktale resides essentially in its message, structure and style."²⁵

Among other things, Lüthi is using the contrast with legends and saint's legends to describe the true folktale style.

²⁴ (Anthony D. Smith. <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/smith1.htm>. Read: 04.21.07)

²⁵ (Max Lüthi. *The European Folktale, Form and Nature* 1982. Page xv)

Lüthi says that what all the three genres have in common is how they relate just as much with “(...)’otherworldly’ mythical reality as with an everyday reality.”²⁶

One big difference is how the legend can deal solely with Gods or other supernatural beings; human beings need not appear in it, in the folktales, the hero is always a human being.

Another difference between the folktale and the legends is how the characters in the story react to elements of the supernatural. An example of the folktale magic is this; the lion says to the hero; “If you are ever in trouble, bend this hair and you will turn into a lion three times stronger than I.” The hunter said, ‘Thank you,’ and went on his way”- this is all the tale says. The hero shows neither astonishment nor doubt.”²⁷

The lack of astonishment or wonder when the hero meets supernatural magic is an important characteristic of the folktale, which is quite the opposite of a normal reaction within a legend. The preferred subject of legends is the numinous and the supernatural. Folktales too tell of many beings that could be called otherworldly: witches, fairies, clairvoyant women, the grateful dead, trolls, giants, dwarves good and evil sorcerers, dragons and mythical animals, but the folktale hero seems unaware of any gulf separating him from these other beings. In legends this is quite the opposite, the legends often operate with a normal world and a supernatural world, with certain meeting points. These meeting points, places or supernatural beings, are often the subjects of the story. The folktale hero is afraid of danger, but not the uncanny, as the main character in the legends often are. In folktales the supernatural beings are important as helpers or adversaries, but in themselves they have no interest.

Other world helpers are not the domestic companions or fellow-workers of ordinary people, but rather they flash from the void whenever the plot requires them.

Another of the laws of the folktale, according to Lüthi, is that nothing is mentioned if it doesn’t influence the plot.

“Only rarely does the folktale mention sentiments and attributes for their own sake or to create a certain atmosphere. It mentions them only when they influence the plot.”²⁸

²⁶ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 114)

²⁷ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 6)

²⁸ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 13)

An example of false style is described like this:

“Almost fainting for joy, the princess sank to the feet of her savior”²⁹

According to Lüthi, the characters are not driven by internal emotions, it is external impulses that propel the characters forward. The folktales express internal feelings through external events and psychological motivations through external impulses. He goes so far to as to say that the term characters means simply those figures that carry forward the plot.

The examples mentioned above are descriptions of ways of magic in the true folktale. In my analysis of the six fairy tales I will try to figure out to what extent Lüthi's laws of the genre are present in the material.

To analyze the pairwise fairytales I will break them down to into smaller components by using Propp's functions from the Morphology of the folktale.

The functions – a permanent element

The functions are the invariable, permanent elements in the stories, and they don't change no matter who the persons are and no matter how they are fulfilled.

The functions are the fundamental constitutional unity.

The number of functions in the tales of magic is limited.

The order of the functions is always identical.

All the tales of magic belongs to the same type, they have the same structure.

The best way to explain Propp's functions is to describe the most important ones.

The most important functions in these types of tales are Villainy or Lack because these functions are closely bound to the plot of the tale. Each new act of villainy, each new lack creates a new move.

(Vladimir Propp The Morphology of the Folktale 1996. Page 92)

Other important functions are pairs like:

Interdiction	–	interdiction is violated
Question	–	information
Struggle	–	victory

²⁹ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 14)

Pursuit – rescue.

It's also worth mentioning the hero's absention among the important functions and the liquidation of misfortune or lack, which is the top point in the tale. One other important function is difficult task.

The basic task by using Propp's functions in analyzing is “ The extraction of Genera”³⁰

The 31 functions represent the morphological foundation of fairy tales in general. A tale usually begins with some sort of initial situation. Although this situation is not a function, it is nevertheless an important morphological element.

The relation between characters and functions

I will be looking for identical functions in the fairy tale pairs, carried out by different characters. As mentioned before, the functions are the invariable elements of the tales, while the characters and their attributes are the variable.

“... we sharply separated the question of who acts in the tale from the question of the actions themselves.”³¹

“By attributes we mean the totality of all external qualities of the characters: their age, sex, status, external appearance, peculiarities of this appearance and so forth. These attributes provide the tale with its brilliance, charm and beauty. When one speaks of a tale, he first recalls, of course, Baba Jaga and her hut, many-headed dragons, prince Iván and the beautiful princess, magical flying horses, and many other things. We have seen, however, that one character is easily replaced by another.”

It is worth noting that what Propp is associating with a fairy tale is very unfamiliar to me, as a Norwegian. The Russian folktale tradition has its character, as has the Norwegian and the Japanese. The characters and their attributes belong to the part of the tale that expresses the specific cultural elements.

“ The tale at its core preserves traces of very ancient paganism, of ancient customs and rituals. The tale gradually undergoes a metamorphosis, and these transformations and

³⁰ (Vladimir Propp The Morphology of the Folktale 1996. Side 25)

³¹ (Vladimir Propp The Morphology of the Folktale 1996. Page 87)

metamorphoses of tales are also subjects to certain laws. It is all this these processes that create a multiformity which is exceptionally difficult to analyze.”³²

As I’ve mentioned earlier, Propp consider the function Villainy or Lack as the most important function, if this function is not in the story, then the tale is not tale of magic. Aa (lack or Villainy) constitutes a pair with the function K (liquidation of lack or misfortune), and at the function K, the narrative reaches its peak. Propp also describes the function lack with the word shortage.

Lüthi is critical to Propp’s great emphasize of Lack leading to lack liquidated, as an characteristic of the folktale, in Lüthi’s opinion the formula is valid for many other narratives than the folktale, and real-life situations as well.

“Modern biology regards the human beings as being living in lack (Mangelwesen) who precisely on this account seeks to come in possession of what he lacks, and who therefore advances further than other life forms that are more self sufficient in themselves.”³³

Lüthi sees the tests or trial as a far more important part of the wondertale. According to Lüthi, the folktale hero does not dream of the fulfillment of everyday needs. “On the contrary, the folktales sends him to encounter remote dangers, and his interest does not really focus on the treasure, the kingdom or the spouse he finally wins, but on the adventure for its own sake”.³⁴

Lüthi says that legends are dealing with the fulfillments of every day wishes and that that myths are concerned with elements of lack concerning a group (a collective lack).

Where Propp focuses on the functions Lack and lack liquidated, Lüthi focuses on the difficult task, as a very important characteristic of the folktale.

“The folktale’s episodes do not break of or loose their sense of direction, but pure and sure they reach their specified goal”³⁵

In spite of Lüthi’s critique of Propp, the last sentence of his book *The European Folktale* is this:

³² (Vladimir Propp *The Morphology of the Folktale* 1996. Page 87)

³³ (Max Lüthi. *The European Folktale, Form and Nature* 1982. Page 130)

³⁴ (Max Lüthi. *The European Folktale, Form and Nature* 1982. Page 86)

³⁵ (Max Lüthi. *The European Folktale, Form and Nature* 1982. Page 86)

“Propp’s structural analysis and my stylistic analysis work hand in hand to complement one another.”³⁶

The functions

My main tool for revealing the structure of the stories, are Propp’s function, and this is a short survey of his functions.

I. Preparatory section

1. Initial situation that describes the situation (Not a function).
2. One of the family members leaves home (Definition: Absentation).
3. The hero gets an interdiction (Definition: Interdiction).
4. The interdiction is violated (Definition: Violation).
5. The villain tries to get information (Question).
6. The villain gets the information he needs about his victim (information)
7. The villain tries to deceive his victim, trying to get hold of the victim or some of the victim’s belongings (deception).
8. The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy. (complicity)

II. Main action

- A. The villain causes harm or injury to a member of the family. (Villainy)
 - a. One of the family members either lacks something or desires to have something. (lack)
- B. Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched (mediation, connective incident).
- C. The hero agrees to or decides upon counteraction (beginning counteraction). 1. The hero leaves home (departure).
- D. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper. (First function of the donor).
- E. The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor (the hero’s reaction). D and E can also be defined as testing of the hero.

³⁶ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page133)

- F. The hero acquires the use of a magical agent (provision or receipt of a magical agent).
- G. The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search (guidance).
- H. The hero and the villain join in direct combat (struggle).
- I. The hero is branded (branding, marking).
- J. The villain is defeated (victory).
- K. The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated. (This function, together with villainy (A), constitutes a pair. The narrative reaches its peak in this function).
- +. The hero returns (return).
- Pr. The hero is pursued (Pursuit, chase).
- Rs. Rescue of the hero from pursuit (rescue).
- O. The hero, unrecognized, arrives home, or in another country (unrecognized arrival).
- L. A false hero presents unfounded claims (unfounded claims).
- M. A difficult task is proposed to the hero (difficult task)
- N. The task is resolved (solution).
- Q. The hero is recognized (recognition).
- Ex. The false hero or villain is exposed (exposure).
- T. The hero is given a new appearance (transfiguration).
- U. The villain is punished (punishment).
- W. The hero is married, and or ascends the throne (wedding)

In Propp's model there are seven characters and they are connected with different functions.

1. The villain (A,H,Pr),
2. The donor (D,F)
3. The princess and her father (M,I, Ex, Q, U, W),
4. The dispatcher, (B),
5. The hero (C, E, W)
6. A magical object or a helper (G, K, Rs, N, T)

7.The false hero (C, Eneg, L)

Propp also operates with two types of heroes and those are the victimized hero and the seeker hero.

Comparison of texts

“Begin with the problems”³⁷

I’m using different key words to analyze the different layers in the text.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Structure and action | 1. Universal genre |
| 2. Symbol images | 2. Collected in a folklore tradition |
| 3. Characters and their attributes | 3. Cultural references |
| 4. Identity and moral | 4. The use of the Fairy tales |

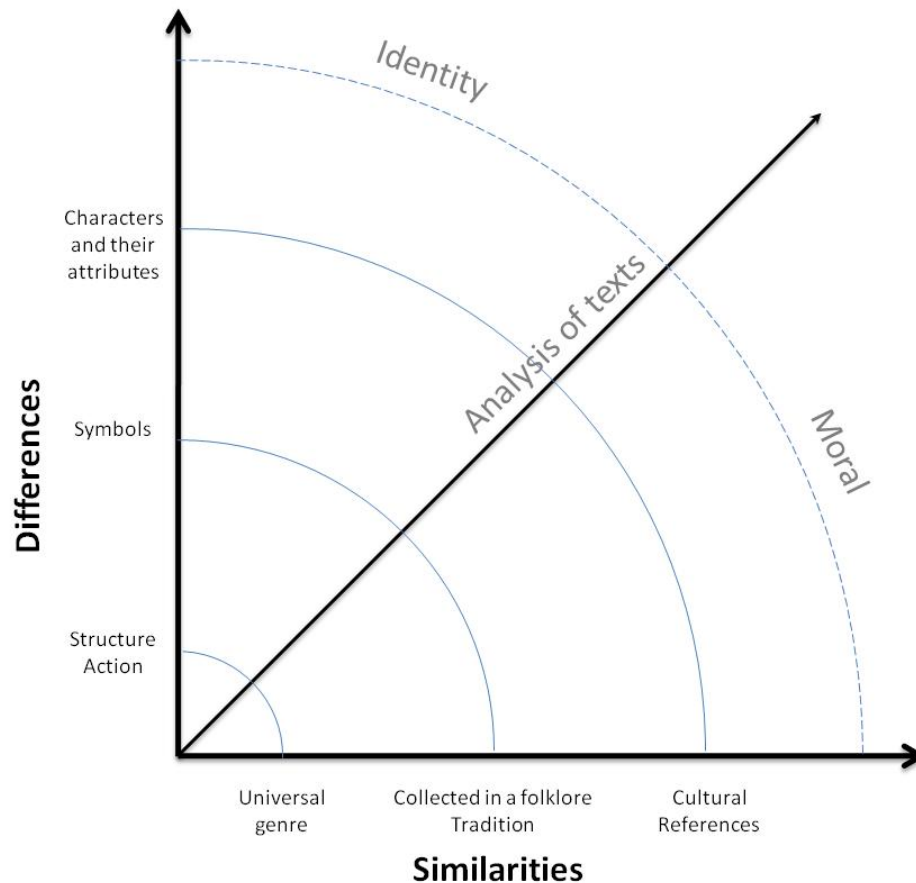
As I’m operating with similarities and differences, I must underline that the borders here are somewhat blurry. But for the most, as number one is closest to similarities, number four closest to differences. Number one and two on the right side is the basis for the comparison, and the basis for the similarities.

In number two, I will be looking for both similarities and differences, as symbols can refer to universal interpretation and cultural aspects. When it comes to number three, I will look for elements in the texts that possibly carry information about Norway or Japan, such as historical evidences or obvious cultural differences, in landscape, manners or customs etc.

Number four has the key words identity and moral and I will look at the use of the Japanese fairytales in the nation-building process.

The texts have been used to create identity. An important aspect of the creation of identity is the use of the genre fairytales, and the moral aspects of the fairytales. The use of the moral in the stories is something that has been central in the identity-process in both countries. The Japanese texts will be analyzed by using Carol Gluck’s work in the book, Japan’s Modern Myths, Ideology in the Late Meiji Period, through the key words, identity and moral.

³⁷ (Richard G Fox, , Andre Gingrich Anthropology by comparison 2002. Foreword by Marilyn Strathern: xviii)



1. Structure and action

The structure of the stories is shown by breaking the tales into their components by the use of Propp's functions and in this way extracting the genera of the story. Through these extractions, the similarities will be visible. The underlying structures of the stories reveals the similarities connected to plot and motive, as well as it shows the parts of the fairytales that are universal. The universality will also be investigated by analysis of genre, i.e. what makes a folktale a folktale.

“No comprehensive attempt will be made to compare the folktales of different lands; instead, I shall seek to identify the basic form that all folktales have in common. My interest does not lie in individual differences that can be

observed from narrator to narrator and from people to people; rather, I shall seek to identify what makes a folktale a folktale.”³⁸

How many of Lüthi’s laws of the genre are present in the tales I’m analyzing?
“Nothing alive is schematic, and yet everything alive strives for a certain form. No single narrative will rigidly follow all the rules of the genre, but many narratives approach the strict form and approximate it.”³⁹

The key word ‘action’ is also important in the universal part of the analysis, and is both connected to Propp’s functions, as most of them are actions in themselves, as well as it is linked to what Lüthi describes as an abstract style, where the characters shows their emotions through actions. The actions are in a way synonym with emotions, and the abstract way that fairytales in away speaks an emotional language and deals with universal topics connected with myths and the universality of myths.

“The folktale is the playful daughter of myth.”⁴⁰

2. Symbol images

For the second part of the analysis that I have called in between similarities and differences, I have chosen symbol images as key word. The symbol images can have many layers and possible interpretations, referring both to universal elements and cultural aspects. The symbolic language has been described as the only universal language human beings have ever invented.

A similarity is that there are symbol images in the stories. That shows that there are other similarities than the structure and action. What kind of symbols is it?

The symbol images also points to other layers of the thesis which is where differences that are conditioned by culture are expressed.

³⁸ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 3)

³⁹ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 108)

⁴⁰ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page 114)

3. The characters and their attributes

Structure and action shows similarities. Symbol images shows similarities and differences. That there are characters with attributes is a similarity. But by taking a closer look at the characters and their attributes, an opportunity is given to grab the most difficult part of the thesis – to reveal cultural differences. By using the key words the characters and their attributes, what differences in the texts will be revealed?

“The study of attributes makes possible a scientific *interpretation* of the tale. From the historical point of view, this signifies that the fairy tale in its morphological bases, represents a *myth*.”⁴¹

4. Identity and moral

Through the key words identity and moral, I will look at how the Japanese tales have been used in the process of creating a national identity during the Meiji-period. As the fairytale contains a certain form of moral connected to its universality, it is both the universal part and the parts of the tales that represents cultural characteristics that have been used.

In the understanding of the use of the Fairy tales there are some elements in the nationbuilding-process in both countries that are important.

1. Cultural standardization through obligatory education.
2. The use of folk-culture as an expression of the spirit of the people.
3. A regional identity needed to be replaced by a national identity.

In the nation building process both in Norway and Japan, the school played an important part, because it was possible to teach the same to all of the children, and in this connection, aslo fairytales were part of the teachings. A new identity and a kind of collective memory were created at the same time, where, among other things, the characters of the chosen folktales became something everyone in the nation became familiar with. Both Momotaro and the Ash Lad are important references their respective country of origin, in Japan and Norway.

⁴¹ (Vladimir Propp, *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1996). Page 90)

Kalland writes this about the school in Japan and it's role in the creation of national identity:

The school had a conservative role, and it's impossible to overestimate its importance for the development of a national culture. The unit school with official approved books implied that everyone was taught the same things. Consequently, a mutual understanding of the history and what it meant to be Japanese was created.⁴²

The role of the elementary school to teach everyone the same things is of course similar to the process in Norway and one of the great hallmarks of the industrialization connected with identity building. It shows what kind of role the fairytales has actually played in creating identity and collective memories in the two countries.

The building of the national state required a school system that included all groups in the society. "A school for common people (almueskolen) was established in Norway in 1739 and in 1889 a law about compulsory primary school attendance was established in the cities and in the countryside".⁴³

Key words for what was needed to create a national identity:

Social mobility

A certain level of knowledge in the population, gained by a compulsory school system

A certain level in industrialization with a developed infrastructure.

A premise for shared cultural experiences gave the population identity

Elements from folk-culture that was made visible processed and communicated.⁴⁴

Jørgen Moe and the folktales

In the book; *Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene* by Ørnulf Hodne, Jørgen Moe's work and intentions are described. Moe was travelling in certain areas of the country, searching for storytellers and writing down their stories. His work was a combination of a national

⁴² (Arne Kalland Japans historie. Fra jegersamfunn til økonomisk supermakt 2005. Page 367)

⁴³ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 105)

⁴⁴ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995. Page 59)

program and a wish to recreate truthful reproduction of the tradition. In his eyes a fairytale was an anonymous collective spiritual expression containing a rich poetical world. A part from the national program he had poetic arguments for collecting fairy tales such as the opinion that in the popular poetry one can find the memory of what God created human to be.⁴⁵

Hodne is using the words childlike religious believe and charity-ethics to describe some of Moe's motivations. Moe considered the folktales to be a treasure for self-understanding and identity. The fairytales carried and released the national idea.

A part of Moe's identity was that he considered himself a storyteller, and this identity reflected the way he processed the collected text.

One of his principles was that he wanted to know as many versions of a Fairy tale as possible so that he could find what was characteristic. The many parallel versions of each story documented that the stories he chose for publishing was genuine.

Examples that proved that the stories were genuine could be, among other things, historical connections to the country, traces of Northern culture such as for instance the Trolls, it could be elements of Christian Catholic beliefs or Norwegian nature and folk-life. Typical elements were ethical problems and character-types with comical elements.

What he did with the processing of the texts was:

He could add elements to the characterization of the characters and their motives to explain and make visible what makes them act the way they do.

He could make the ethical elements in the characters stronger. Examples: Loyalty, obedience and self-denial.⁴⁶

He could choose to add epical fine-tunings or he could add descriptions of Norwegian nature.

What he didn't do was to change the basic text. The line of motifs and the dialogue was always kept. What he eventually changed was things that improved the story epically.

The adjustments he made were connected with his identity as a storyteller. He was retelling stories within the tradition of oral storytelling: Even in the freest of the retellings,

⁴⁵ (Ørnulf Hodne. Jørgen Moe og forleeventyrene 1979. Page 225)

⁴⁶ (Ørnulf Hodne. Jørgen Moe og forleeventyrene 1979. Page 275)

what was not changed was the structure of motifs, the main content in actions and the dialogues.

The changes Moe made were connected with ethics and the landscape and Moe's wish to release the 'spirit of the people'. His intention led to the fact that some parts of the stories were made stronger, some things were added and some things removed. Moe did this in a folklore tradition, like the folklore science was at that time. What direct implications does this have on the fairy tales? They have been collected and published with the intent to release the 'spirit of the nation'. It is difficult to separate between what's added and what's not. I believe the important aspect here is to realize what intentions the publishers of the tales had. They used the oral tradition in a truthful way, but added and made stronger elements that served their purpose in an identity building process.

Myths and Modernization

As the modernization of Japan started, in the Meiji-period (1868-1912) enormous changes took place. The social structure of the society changed with the growing industrialization, and there was also a big enterprise of ideology. The changes involved that the politics was centralized, the economy developed and that social classes were rearranged. Another goal was international recognition; that Japan, as a nation should be considered equal with the European nations and America. The ideology of the Meiji-period was connected to defining Japan as a modern nation, as well as defining the 'spirit of the nation' considering what made Japan and the Japanese different from other nations and people. In the book, *Japan's modern myths* by Carol Gluck, she writes that in this period ideology appeared as a conscious enterprise.

“From the 1880s through the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, the Japanese first sought to conceive and then inculcate an ideology suitable for modern Japan.”⁴⁷

Gluck points to the fact that the last part of the Meiji-period is where the ideology for the most part is created, an ideology that in some ways ended after World War II and in some ways still exists.

⁴⁷ (Carol Gluck *Japan modern Myths, Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* 1985. Side 3)

The ideology in the period encouraged people to consider themselves “Japanese” and members of a modern nation. Important elements of the ideology are connected to the change of loyalty: From the feudal society with the loyalty and belonging directed towards feudal lords with a shogun on the top - to a modern nation with the Emperor on the top. Literally speaking, Meiji restoration means restoration of the power to the Emperor. It is connected to the dissolving of the class system and the introduction of obligatory school system where “fairytales” in schoolbooks are important. Fairytales, myths etc. were important tools in this training and the process of creating identity. Education and the educational rescript played important roles under the period as well as the introduction of the “ie-system” with the Emperor as the great head of the family. In this connection filial piety is important.

Moral, loyalty and filialty

Through the ideologization process, moral, loyalty and filialty were important as part of the process of change. In the mixture of modernization and adoption of Western ways of doing and thinking, was also a reestablishing of myths from the depth of Japanese history. The role of the Emperor is an example of this mixture. He was taking on a role as a modern monarch in European tradition, as well as he had a role as a living god, sacred and inviolable. The imperial house was considered the axis of the nation, and the government considered that:

Without such an axis “the state will eventually collapse when politics are entrusted to the reckless discussions of the people.”⁴⁸

In the enterprise of ideology, to strengthen the axis of the nation through the imperial house and towards the “potential threats” of the social changes in the society:

“It required the entire Meiji-period to weave the Emperors new clothes and display them effectively for the people.”⁴⁹

The imperial image was an intricate layer of moral, regal and religious constructions of the Emperors office.

⁴⁸ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 76)

⁴⁹ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 73)

The Emperor represented the line from ages eternal, the line to the first Emperor Jimmu, who was the grandchild of the sun goddess Amaterasu, but it was also a need to bring the sovereign down from the clouds to strengthen the relation between *ikkun banmin*: the ruler and the people.

In the first two decades of the Meiji-period the Emperor was undertaking six journeys to the most remote parts of Japan, and spent 273 days on these journeys to see his subjects and to be seen by them.

The duality of the Emperor's role was also present in the ceremony of the Constitution. The ceremony was taking place in the palace, and it was a dual ceremony, both of a modern monarchy and ancient reverence. It took place on 11th February 1889 on the 2594th anniversary of the legendary founding of Japan.

One part of the ceremony was conducted to the Emperor's ancestors and to swearing an oath to uphold their legacy, as well as sending a message to the myriads of gods, the *kamis* from Shinto.

The ceremony was a mixture of modern European protocol and statecraft, and the mythic appeals from the deepest Japanese past. In this metamorphosis the Meiji Emperor appeared as a European style monarch in Western clothes and the furniture was Western, combined with the venerable Japanese tradition, the descent of the ruling house from the sun goddess.

The constitution was the rules of the country, which were concealed and celebrated like the sacred content of the portable shrine in the Shinto festival. The ceremony was a beginning of something that might be called "a national spring."

The Rescript on Education

In all schools in Japan, the Rescript of Education was put up as direct message from the Emperor, and an object that the students and teachers should pay respect for. It starts like this, Know ye, Our Subjects, and it has three paragraphs; the first states that Japan's national polity was based on the historical bonds between the benevolent emperors and loyal subjects. In the second, it exhorted the

Japanese to follow 16 items of Confucian code of ethics, such as "Be filial to one's parents, affectionate to one's brothers and sisters, extend one's benevolence to all, observe

the law," and so on. In case of emergency, one had to devote oneself mentally and physically to guarding the emperor. The third paragraph stressed that the virtues listed were the teachings passed on by imperial ancestors and had to be observed by all Japanese.

The Rescript, taught phrase by phrase, was often illustrated in class by tales of historical heroes and folk legends. This was often true outside the schools as well, where the Rescript was a popular subject in illustrated books, magic lantern shows, and New Year's games (sugoroku): "if you make a mistake in reading the Rescript, you miss a turn. The pious phrases of the Rescript was even matched to the adventures of the fairytale hero Momotaro, the "peach boy" who was loyal and filial as he quelled the denizens of Demon Island.⁵⁰

Here is an example of how a fairytale can serve as a part of ideology, and the moral in the story is used as the moral of the ideology. As one of the characteristics of the fairytales is that they contain universal moral, this moral seems to be used for certain purposes. The nature of the fairytale is that it is both indigenous and universal at the same time, as it is said here about the morality of the Emperor that is reflected in the Rescript of Education.

"The Emperor was the source of a morality that was said to be both indigenous and universal at the same time."⁵¹

It was a purpose with the Rescript and the purpose was to make "good citizens" and serving as the basis for loyalty and patriotism, not only in schools, but in society at large. The meaning of the Rescript changed from the initial understanding to a new connection deeper into the realms of nationalism and patriotism.

"Thus the Rescript, whose meaning, "in a word," in 1980 had been morality, or, at most, moral education, now signified nationalism."⁵²

Japan's indigenous morality began with filiality and the family and then extended to the nation in the form of loyalty and patriotism.

In the construction of a shared ideological universe, different unconnected institutions, public and private, schools and newspapers were dealing with ideology. Key

⁵⁰ (Carol Gluck, Japan's Modern Myths 1985. Side 149)

⁵¹ (Carol Gluck, Japan's Modern Myths 1985. Side 121)

⁵² (Carol Gluck, Japan's Modern Myths 1985. Side 133)

words were national consciousness, moral and material welfare, such as, clean clothes, healthy minds, moral hearts and spiritual wellbeing.

The enemies

The ideologists experienced it like there was a wind from the west that treathened to overwhelm the distinctive custom and manners of Japan by European models. Unpatriotism was considered a danger, as well as Western style parliamentary conflict and political fever. Ideologists in Japan wanted national unity and inner “spiritual revival” against the potential threat of the social results of modernity. The problems in the process of turning peasants to Frenchmen or Germans to Volk or immigrants into one hundred procent Americans, is similar. In short, the Japanese were no instant patriots either.⁵³

Metaphorical foreigners were Japanese people that were considered to have alien ways and thoughts, such as individualism, socialism, unhealthy Western preoccupation with materialism and personal success. Not unlike American nativism of the same period (dealing with real and not metaphorical foreigners), late Meiji ideology insisted on social conformity as the binding principle of national loyalty.⁵⁴

Politics in general was considered a threat and there was even made a law towards political actions. Parents were encouraged to safeguard their children towards politics and religion because it was outside the boundaries of patriotism.⁵⁵

The Emperor encouraged the military not to be led astray by current opinions, not to meddle in politics and with single heart fullfil the essential duties of loyalty.

There was an opposition, who choose to speak up for the people (kan) towards the officials (min). They were intellectuals and the press who campaigned for a properly parliamentary opposition.

During the Meiji-period both the Sino-Japanese war 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese war 1904-1905 was fought. From the government, the call for a sense of nation was connected to preparations for war, and it craved a strong patriotism.

⁵³ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 39)

⁵⁴ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 38)

⁵⁵ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 57)

If the metaphorical foreigners represented an ideological mirror, a conflict with real foreigners, such as in the Chinese, were presented as conflict between civilization and barbarism. These ideas of civilization toward barbarism were even praised in a popular song where China was the enemy of of civilization against which Japan “fought a righteous war”⁵⁶

The Constitution was the first step towards the international recognition Japan was striving for. As the Meiji-period proceeded a greater national selfesteem grew and imperialism was included in the package of nationalism, as was the reality for other great nations such as England, France, America, Spain etc. Also the idea of “the higher civilization” as an excuse for war, and the expanding of property on behalf of other groups of people. The tradition of an “us” as civilized towards a “barbarian culture” symbolized by demons has a long tradition in Japanese culture, and is also present in the story of Momotaro. The enemies are demonized, and therefore the war is “righteous” such as the war against China. Also an old cultural respect for China was defeated by the war, replaced by a national pride.

“A pride of Empire at the expense of an age-old cultural respect for China.”⁵⁷
A part of the creation of national identity was a search for the roots to the past, and the culture of the peasants was considered to carry such roots. The nationalists were searching for sources of indigenous Japanese culture. Since Yangaita Kunio was considering himself a part of a folklore tradition, his work with traditions and manners of the peasants drew attention from cultural nationalists who sought to use his work as part of the national ideology.

“Yet, as he traveled around in the countryside in the 1900s, wearing the traditional straw sandals that Maeda had also worn when he embarked as an agricultural “pilgrim” in 1892, Yanagita was making his own pilgrimage to the cultural “native place” of the Japanese. He and other intellectuals such as Nitobe Inazo combined erudite treatises on agricultural administration and economics with romantic evocations of the countryside as the repository of ancestral customs. Their writings and lectures thus contributed, if unintentionally, to the same agrarian myth that the government was finding useful. While Yanagita embarked on his folkloric forays into the rural origins of Japanese ethnicity, others invoked

⁵⁶ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 136)

⁵⁷ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Side 136)

village customs for different purposes. The army, though not institutionally inclined to pastoral sentimentalism, praised “the manners and mores of the people” in the villages remote enough from cities and civilization to have preserved the rustic, simple ways of the past.”⁵⁸

Yanagita Kunio and Keigo Seki were collecting and publishing fairytales within the folklore tradition. Still, I do not have information about the process from oral the published material. I have that kind of information about the Norwegian folktales, from Ørnulf Hodne’s doctorate on Jørgen Moe and the folktales. The differences in the information about the fairytales have led to a comparison where I am using the Norwegian fairytales to highlight the similarities and differences in the texts from the two countries, whereas only the Japanese texts will be used to answer the last question: How have the fairytales been used.

All of the comparison of the texts will be about the relation between the universal aspects of the stories and the indigenous parts that belongs to the cultural connection of the stories. The universality of the Norwegian tales will underline the universality of the Japanese tales and the similarities will make the differences visible.

“Comparison is its game in at once the most serious and the most playful sense - not to be given away, but to be played”⁵⁹

⁵⁸ (Carol Gluck, Japan’s Modern Myths 1985. Side 180)

⁵⁹ Fox, Richard G, Andre Gingrich Anthropology by comparison 2002. Foreword by Marilyn Strathern, p. xvii)

THE ANALYSIS

Before breaking down the tales into components using Propp's functions, I have written a summary of the tales from Hiroko Ikeda's *Types of the Japanese Folktales* and from Ørnulf Hodne's *Types of the Norwegian Folktales*. The summary describes the type of tale classified under the AT-number. Some of the details in the summary may differ from the tale that is analyzed. When the summary includes different examples, I have chosen only the ones that describe the tale I'm using for the analysis.

The hero

Both versions of AT 302 are about two different, but similar heroes, Momotaro, the Peach Boy from Japan and Askeladden, the Ash Lad from Norway. I have placed the two stories side by side, and divided them into functions, according to Vladimir Propp's system.

Many versions of AT 302 exist in both countries. The compilations of folktales with AT numbers by Hodne and Ikeda have a short summary to describe what the story, in general, is about. Some of the details in the summary differ from those in the stories I have analyzed, which are the Keigo Seki and Asbjørnsen and Moe versions.

Underneath are the summaries from the compilations written by Hiroko Ikeda and Ørnulf Hodne:

AT 302 The Peach Boy Momotaro

The Hero. A boy comes to a childless couple from a peach, which has come floating downstream. He is named Momotaro. He grows rapidly into a remarkable, strong young man. He asks his parents to prepare some millet dumplings, a magic strength-giving food, for him to take along on his expedition to the ogres' island.

Animals as extraordinary companions: Momotaro meets a dog on the way and it asks for a millet dumpling. He gives it one, and the dog becomes his companion. Then a monkey and a pheasant come along and they also join the party after eating the dumplings.

The ogres' island. Momotaro and his animal companions make the ogres surrender, and their treasures are brought home.

AT 302 The ogre's (devil's) heart in the egg

A boy helps some animals by sharing a meal in a fair manner, and is rewarded with the ability to transform himself into their shapes. He finds a bewitched princess in a mountain, and she tricks the ogre into revealing his life secrets (where his heart is, how he can be killed etc.). The boy finds the hiding place by means of his supernatural powers/animal helpers, and kills the ogre in the prescribed manner

The Peach boy, Momotaro	The ogre's (devil's) heart in the egg (Risen som ikke hadde noe hjerte på seg)
I. Preparatory section	I. Preparatory section
1. Initial situation: An old woman finds big peaches floating down the river. She picks one up and brings it home for her husband to eat. Motivation: She wants to make her husband happy. The husband returns to the house. Inside the peach is a baby boy. They take good care of him, and soon he grows up to be a young man.	1. Initial situation: There was a king who had seven sons and he cared so much about them that he could never be let them all be away at the same time. 2. (Absentation) The six oldest brothers leave home to find brides, and to bring home a bride for the youngest brother, the Ash Lad. 7. (Deception) They find six

II. Main action

A. (Villainy) The villain causes harm or injury: some onis (ogres) living on an island outside Japan represent the villainy in the story. (Propp describes this function as causing harm to a member of the family, but in this case the harm is done to the Japanese people.)

B. Misfortune is made known: the hero is approached with a request; he is allowed to go (mediation, connective incident): Momotaro wants to go the onis' island and fight them. After some hesitation the old man and woman allow him to go. (It's the hero's own idea to fight the ogre, not a request from outside.)

C. (Beginning counteraction.) The hero reacts to the villain's actions.

1. The hero leaves home (departure): Before he sets out on his journey he asks for kibi-dango (pounded-rice and millet dough). He gets new trousers, a new towel about his head and a flag with the inscription "Japan's number

princesses they want to marry and on the way home they pass the troll's farm up in the mountain and forget to be careful.

8. (Complicity) The troll turns all twelve of them into stones.

II. Main action.

A. (Villainy) The elder brothers never return and the king's sorrow is great.

C (Beginning counteraction) The hero reacts to the villain's actions.

1. The hero leaves home. (Departure)

The Ash Lad asks his father for permission to seek his elder brothers, and the father reluctantly accepts his son's wish. The elder sons got all the nice horses, so the Ash Lad has to take an old, scruffy horse, but the Ash Lad doesn't mind.

D. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc, which prepares the way for his receiving a helper. (First function of the donor.): After riding for a while, he meets a raven asking for food.

E. (The hero's reaction). The Ash Lad gives the bird his food and the bird promises to help him when he's in trouble.

F. A variation of the function F (magical agent) is: Various characters place themselves at the disposal of the hero.

one Momotaro”

D. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc. which prepares the way for his receiving a helper. (First function of the donor.): When he has walked as far as the end of the village a dog comes barking at him, asking him where he’s going. The dog also asks for one of his Japan’s number one kibi-dango to eat.

E. (The hero’s reaction). Momotaro gives the dog a kibi-dango and by eating it, the dog gets the strength of ten men.

F. A variation of the function F, (magical agent) is: Various characters place themselves at the disposal of the hero.

The functions D, E and F are repeated two more times. Momotaro meets a pheasant up in the mountains and later a monkey. Both of them get a kibi-dango and become his retainers. Momotaro becomes the general.

G. (Transference) They walk straight to the island of the onis and the monkey knocks on the big black gate.

H. The hero and the villain join in direct combat (struggle): A red oni comes out and Momotaro presents himself and asks the onis to get ready to meet him. All

The functions D, E and F are repeated two more times. The Ash lad meets a salmon stranded on land, and the salmon asks him to throw him back into the water, and then he meets a wolf that wants to eat his horse because the wolf has not eaten in two years. The Ash lad gives the animals what they ask for. The salmon promises to help him, like the bird did, but the wolf offers to give him a ride.

G. (Guidance): The wolf takes him to the troll’s farm where his brothers are and tells him to go inside.

D. (First function of the donor) Inside there is a princess who tells him the secret about the troll, that he doesn’t keep his heart in his body and can’t be killed.

F. (Provision or receipt of magical agent)

The princess tells him to hide under the bed, while she asks the troll where his heart is. This is repeated three times. The first two times the troll does not tell the truth, but the third time he tells where it is. Inside an egg that is inside a duck, swimming in a well inside a church on an island.

G. (Guidance) The wolf takes the boy to the church.

M. (Difficult task) Getting hold of the troll’s heart. First challenge: The key to

the other onis are at a drinking party. They come out to fight with Momotaro and his companions, but they don't have a chance because, together the heroes have the strength of a thousand men.

J. The villain is defeated.

(Victory): The black oni general falls down on his knees and begs forgiveness and promises not to do any harm ever again.

K. The initial lack is liquidated.

The villains are defeated.

+ The hero returns. Momotaro brings home a lot of treasures from the onis' island and on top of that he is rewarded by the Emperor. He uses his reward to take care of the old man and woman.

the church is high up in a tower.

F. (Provision or receipt of magical agent)

The boy calls for the bird, and the bird gets the key.

M. They get inside the church and when the boy catches the duck, the egg falls down into the well.

F. The boy calls for the salmon and the salmon swims to the bottom of the well and gets the egg.

H. (struggle) When the boy squishes the egg, the troll screams.

J. (Victory), N. (solution) and K. (Initial lack liquidated). The boy tells the troll to release his brothers and the six princesses from being stones. When that is done he breaks the egg and the troll cracks. By this action, the villain is defeated, the difficult task is solved and the initial lack is liquidated.

+ The hero returns. The hero returns to his father with all six brothers, their princesses and the princess from the troll's farm.

W. Wedding: A big wedding is held and the Ash Lad and his bride sit next to the king.

“...act uniquely, you can only see with your own eyes”⁶⁰

Similarities

Key words: Structure and action

Among the similarities are invariable elements, structure and universal human desires; the point of universality in the folktale universe that also might be called a language of emotions.

The structure of the stories is connected with Propp's functions where he extracts the genera of the story, which are separated from the characters and their attributes. The symbols of the functions in the two versions of AT 302 look like this:

Momotaro

1-A-B-C-î-(D-E-F)x3-G-H-J-K-+

The Ash Lad

1-2-7-8-A-C-î-(D-E-F)x3-G-D-F-G-M-F-H-J-N-K-+W

From this extraction of the stories, we can see that they are quite similar with regard to Propp's functions, and the two stories evolve more or less like this: Some kind of villainy is committed (function A). This function is connected to the plot of the story. Then the heroes leave home (î), encounter three animals (D-E-F) x 3 and are tested by them. The animals provide necessary help, the villains are fought and defeated (J-K). This is the top point of the stories where misfortune is liquidated. After this, the heroes return home (+). This is the very basic structure of AT 302. One may call it the skeleton of the story. It is a dichotomy between villainy committed by a monster/monsters and the hero that takes action against the monster, fights it, after which point harmony is restored.

Propp separates the actor from the action itself. In both stories we have heroes, villains, three helper animals and the family of the hero. These characters, without any further description, are connected to certain functions, or actions.

The villain in both stories is connected to the functions A (Villainy) and H (struggle)

⁶⁰ (Richard G. Fox, Andre Gingrich Anthropology by comparison 2002. Foreword by Marilyn Strathern, page. xviii)

The three animals in both stories are connected to the functions D (first function of the donor) and F (provision or receipt of a magical agent). As I see it, the animals are both donors, helpers and, in a way, magical agents, since they provide the hero with what he needs to solve his task. In the case of Momotaro, they fight against the villain. Actually, the animals in the story of Momotaro act as the hero's companions and that is an exception from Lüthi's description of helpers, that they flash from the void, whenever the plot requires it.

In the story of the Ash Lad, they follow Lüthi's example and help him in different ways and provide all the necessary information and special help along the way. One magical element the animals have in common is the fact that they can speak.

In both stories each animal has the characteristics of an animal, yet intellectually acts and speaks like a human. The Norwegian folktale collector Jørgen Moe has written down his view on what characterizes the genre universally. He writes that the folktales show a poetic view of life, with roots in old mythical conceptions. The folktales also show a childish, naive and impulsive view of nature and animals, where everything is alive, thinks and acts.

"The whole of nature, the living and the dead, are put on an equal foot with human beings intellectually, and they live, speak and act as humans."⁶¹

The hero himself is connected to C (beginning counteraction), where he reacts to villainy and E (the hero's reaction) where he reacts to the tests of the future donor, in these stories, the animals. Propp connects the hero to W (wedding) which is the normal ending in the Western folktale tradition, while this is not so common in Japan.

Other participants in the traditional folktale according to Propp, are the Princess and her father. The princess is not present in the Japanese story, while she is in the Norwegian story. Here she is connected with the function M (difficult task), U (punishment) and W (wedding). She plays an important role when it comes to finding out how to kill the troll in the story. The two versions of AT 302 follow Propp's scheme, concerning which functions the characters are connected to.

⁶¹ (Ørnulf Hodne. Jørgen Moe og forleeventyrene 1979. Page 248)

Let's have a look at Propp's most important function, lack or villainy. In the Norwegian story, the seven princes lack brides and this fact makes the six older brothers undertake a journey. On the journey, they are deceived by a troll and turned into stone (Villainy) and that's where the hero takes action and the story begins.

In the Japanese story, the hero decides upon a journey himself, because some onis are attacking the Japanese people. The onis' attacks are the villainy that makes this story begin.

So far so good, but Lüthi says Propp is wrong when he says that lack and villainy are the most important functions. Lüthi thinks that lack or villainy can describe any form of narrative and that the description is too general and does not catch the essence of the genre fairytale. It is the function test or trial, which is the most important function. This is because the hero does not seek treasure or challenge out of need, rather he seeks the adventure for its own sake. Lüthi's term test or trial I understand as function D, where the hero is tested and where he shows who he is by his reaction to the test. (He shows his ability to come to terms with everything he encounters.)

Momotaro and the Ash Lad are both young boys who leave home, and when they return, they enter a new stage in life. Momotaro comes home with some of the onis' treasures and receives a reward from the government. This enables him to take care of his elderly parents. But according to Lüthi, the folktale hero does not seek the treasure for its own sake, it is rather to be seen as a consequence of his actions, and the real treasure might be described as courage, ability to solve a difficult task, or to defeat the villain. He becomes a hero through his actions, and that is the real treasure. This is similar to the Ash Lad.

He gets married at the end of the story, and thereby enters a grown-up stage in life. Before he reaches this stage he must be tested. I believe the ability to solve impossible tasks is connected to the message of the story.

In the book *Fortellingens mønstre* (the patterns of a story) the author Irene Engelstad has used Joseph Campbell and his theories from *The hero with a thousand faces* as a model for the hero's call to adventure. This is related to Lüthi's terms, with the folktale as a narrative of adventure. In Campbell's terms the adventure is an enlarged version of the formula represented in rites of initiation. Such as:

Separation – initiation – return.

As can be seen from the structure of the stories, the main action takes place when the hero leaves home to start his journey.

While the function villainy, which is what makes him leave home, is a kind of fuel for the adventure, the function D, test or trial, represents a characteristic of the folktale connected to the message of the story. Lüthi describes the folktale hero as a protagonist who comes to terms with everything he encounters. That description is connected to the positive message of the fairytale; the hero faces impossible tasks, and solves them.

Many fairy tales have a figure Propp has called the false hero. The false hero represents a contrast to the real hero and is often characterized by having only the treasure in mind, and by avoiding danger and tests.

“The hero of the folktale meet the right helpers and press the right button to obtain help, whereas the antiheroes frequently do not encounter any helper, and if they do, they react wrongly and forfeit the gift. The hero is the lucky one. It is as if invisible ties linked him with the secret powers or mechanisms that shape the world and fate. Without his being aware of it, his behavior is shaped by cogent laws. As though drawn by a magnet, he, the isolated one, pursues his confident course and follows the precise line of conduct that the framework of his cosmos demands of him.”⁶²

Among other characteristics that describe the genre fairytale, are Lüthi’s terms of one-dimensionality. By that he means, among other things, that the characters in the fairy tales are one-dimensional. They show all their reactions through actions, and have no emotional depth. All the way through the stories, it is the action that states the emotions, and the actions that bring forward the message and style, throughout the cycle of the story. In my eyes, both Momotaro and the Ash Lad fit this description. Inner life is no issue in the world of fairytale, because from one perspective it is like a description of a dreamlike world where the characters themselves represent emotions through their actions. An example of this can be the hero representing courage and wit and the monster representing fear that needs to be overcome.

Since tales of magic are full of magic and mysteries, as a part of their style, the magic and supernatural are quite natural within the genre; such as a boy born from a peach,

⁶² (Max Lüthi *The European Folk Tale Form and Nature* 1982. Page 57)

talking animals, strength-giving food, trolls that can transform humans into stones, the troll's heart inside an egg, etc. All of these mysteries are within the fairy tale in natural surroundings. And then, of course, the hero finds it quite natural as well, and does not react upon it as if it is out of the ordinary. This is the case in both the Japanese and the Norwegian story.

Another of Lüthi's terms quite close to one-dimensionality is the term depthlessness. It elaborates the description of the lack of inner life to the characters in the folktale. Lüthi writes:

"Since the characters of the folktale are only figures that carry forward the plot and have no inner life, folktales must also lack experience of time."⁶³

This statement emphasizes the importance of action in the story, but another element of the stories is also present: time, or to be more precise, the lack of experience of time. It seems to me that the only possible way to express the idea of lack of experience of time is to connect the folktale to the world of dreams. The only other world in which a big floating peach sailing down the river with a baby-boy inside could appear must be in a dream.

Another explanation that does not exclude the link to dreams is a link to the unlimitedness of fantasy. But it is important to emphasize that there are rules that govern both the magical and the fantastical, and these rules are revealed through the structure and the style. In the Norwegian story, an example of lack of experience of time can be seen in the Ash Lad's journey through the forest. A salmon asks to be thrown back into the river, a raven asks for food and a wolf asks if he can eat his horse. The Ash Lad gives them everything he has. Lüthi uses the word miracle, which is a good description of the unearthly or heavenly help the Ash Lad is given by his animal helpers.

"Miracles are the quintessence of all extremes and bring the abstract style to its most pointed expression."⁶⁴

In my eyes, an undercurrent in these coincidences is the contact with the forces of nature, present in early peasant life, in old folk beliefs, rituals and customs. It is not a

⁶³ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982. Page21)

⁶⁴ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982 . Page35)

question of true or not true, possible or impossible, it's an abstract description of unknown forces.

“Again on account of his isolation, however, the folktale hero is totally at the mercy of powers that are completely unknown to him.”⁶⁵

When it comes to the Ash Lad it seems like he just starts walking, and by ‘accident’ he meets the wolf that can take him to the Troll and his brothers. The landscape through which he moves is unknown to him, and he would most likely have been utterly helpless without the helpers and magical objects. When it comes to Momotaro, it is more like he knows his destination, but becomes stronger with the animals by his side, in order to fight the villains. But there is not much with him that is helpless.

The two heroes’ relations to the animal helpers might be described as ‘courage to relate to unknown forces’. This again states a contrast to the examples of false heroes in folktales; the false heroes fail in their response to future donors, and therefore lack magical help from their surroundings, thereby being unable to solve impossible tasks.

As mentioned earlier, the essence of the folktale message can be the fact that the hero comes to terms with everything he encounters, the more impossible the task, the greater is the solution, or the magical help in the otherworldly space.

“Their coincidence is not chance, but precision.”⁶⁶

All of the characteristics I have mentioned above are connected to the universality of the genre. The rules within the otherworld are isolated from everyday life, but they are connected universally. Lüthi uses the terms isolation and universal interconnection. The story takes place in a sphere that also can be called non-place, because it is a kingdom far away or a remote place not connected to history or geography.

I would say that the story of the Ash Lad strictly follows the rules that Lüthi sets up to explain the characteristics of a folktale, but there are some exceptions when it comes to the story about Momotaro. There's no doubt that the story is a tale of magic, but it has elements of legend material. I'll come back to this subject in the cultural analysis.

⁶⁵ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982 . Page58)

⁶⁶ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale, Form and Nature 1982 . Page54)

In his doctoral thesis, Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene, Ørnulf Hodne writes about informants and principals for publishing folktales. Hodne states how, in Moe's view, the universality of the folktales points toward the ancient community of people in a long gone past.

Only in that sense can both the great similarities and differences be explained. The mutual earliest recollections, received in widely spread areas, have with the different native groups unfolded their poetry, where basic ideas remain, even though many changes take place, and the stories are modified after the impressions of nature and surroundings and after the historical events the native people went through and developed by.⁶⁷

Hodne expresses the duality between the great similarities in the impulsive poetry of folktales, and how the surroundings have shaped the stories, while great differences are present at the same time. I have now tried to extract as many similarities as possible in the two versions of AT 302, and at the same time I have tried to see the universal aspects of the stories. The main focus has been on the actions in the stories, through Propp's functions and Lüthi's terms of describing the folktale in general.

I have used action as the key word to look at the similarities in the two stories. This is connected to Propp's functions and the structure of the two stories, which is quite similar. The journey and the encounter with the animals is what characterize the stories the most. The next important similarity is the relation between the hero and the monster. When all the attributes of the characters, the colours of the stories, are removed, they speak the same language. This is what I have called an emotional language, where the characters represent emotions more than they represent real-life human beings. The stories take place in the world of fantasy, a created sphere. As both Propp and Lüthi have studied the rules of this 'world' it is possible to look at the fairy tales from a universal point of view.

In between similarities and differences

Key word: Symbol images

Another aspect of the tales is that the language of the fairytales is full of symbol images. In many ways the symbols are in between similarities and differences, because they

⁶⁷ (Ørnulf Hodne Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene 1979. Page 228)

can refer both to cultural aspects and to universal aspects. By looking up certain words in different dictionaries of symbols, I have looked for evidences that can shed light on possible interpretations of the stories. The first word to look up is the word peach, because Momotaro is the peach boy, born from a peach.

“The peach is identified as a very important symbol in Chinese culture. It is one of the Chinese groups called ‘three fortunate fruits’. In Chinese art, literature and alchemy, the fruit is a symbol of immortality.”⁶⁸

Chinese culture is somewhat linked to Japanese culture, but in, for instance, Persian culture the fruit also symbolizes immortality. Another symbolic meaning is fertility, connected with girls maturing into women, which is also connected with the peach blossoms and peach blossom festival (held in both China and Japan). I find it interesting to interpret the birth of Momotaro in the peach floating down the river as a kind of youthful fertility given to an old woman, who never conceived any child of her own. And the child she gets is not only a gift to her and her husband, but to the country as a whole, because he fights the evil onis attacking the country.

The Norwegian hero has the name the Ash Lad, and I look up the word ashes.

“Ash remains after something is destroyed or purified by fire”.⁶⁹

The Penguin reference Dictionary of Symbols states among other things, that all things associated with death embody the symbolism of ‘the eternal return.’ The Ash Lad is a character that appears in many Norwegian folktales and in traditional interpretations of his character the Ash Lad sits by the fireplace, and is bound to the home and the mother, while his older brothers are more outgoing, and the ones that both the parents and society in general believe in. People often laugh at the Ash lad and his ideas, but in the end, he always succeeds. The Ash lad might be interpreted as the phoenix that leaves his home and the ashes in the fireplace, to return with all the brothers and princesses from the monsters cave. He leaves home with no bravado, with a scruffy horse and old clothes and he returns as a hero.

⁶⁸ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd 1000 Symbols 2002. Page 256)

⁶⁹ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd 1000 Symbols 2002. Page 48)

When the two heroes from the Japanese and the Norwegian stories leave home, they both encounter three different animal helpers. As I see it, the animal helpers are connected with the unknown forces that the fairytale heroes have to rely on. In the Japanese story, the hero meets a dog, a monkey and a pheasant, while the Norwegian hero meets a raven, a big salmon and a wolf.

I will compare two and two animals:

Dog	–	wolf
Pheasant	–	raven
Monkey	–	salmon

While the dog in many cultures is regarded as a noble and faithful companion, the wolf is a dangerous beast of prey, considered a danger to human beings and normally appearing as the enemy. As I see it, Momotaro is a brave and strong classical hero, while the Ash Lad is more two-sided. He does not have the appearance of a hero. The wolf is also two-sided in that he normally is not a friend of humans like the dog is. Momotaro's bird is a pheasant.

“Both the cock and the hen pheasant play important parts in Far Eastern mythology, and the call of the hen pheasant is also used in Shinto mythology. The bird was the emissary of Amaterasu-omikami to the kami (divinity) who regulated the world, Ame – wakahiko.”⁷⁰

“In Judeo-Christian culture, the raven is the dark counterpart to the dove. The raven also plays an important role in Norse Mythology; Hugin and Mugin (‘Thought’ and ‘Memory’) are the two ravens that are the god Odin’s companions.”⁷¹

Both birds have links to old mythology, the northern mythology and Shinto mythology. In general, the bird’s ability to fly is widely associated with gods.

A colourful pheasant and a black raven give different associations, just as Momotaro and the Ash Lad are different types of heroes. You may even call them the hero and the anti-hero. A peach is colourful and ashes are grey and black. Momotaro has new

⁷⁰ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996 751)

⁷¹ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd 1000 Symbols 2002. Page 202)

trousers, a headband and a flag saying Japan's best Momotaro, while the Ash Lad has old clothes and a scruffy horse.

The last pair of animals is the monkey and the salmon. As I see it, the animal helpers are the forces in nature that the heroes rely on, and by their help, the heroes are able to solve their great tasks.

The monkey is an important character in Japanese folklore, among other things as a trickster or as a phallic deity. Without any further interpretations, I find it valuable to connect the characterizations to the rites of initiation, as the heroes mature on the way to their goal.

When it comes to the salmon, there are some characteristics that could also be used by the hero to do things that are impossible for others.

"Able to live in saltwater and freshwater, the salmon was thought to be a special fish endowed with prodigious strength as it made its way upriver to the spawning grounds."⁷²

There is of course a multitude of meanings to each symbol image, and my interpretations are a way to try to connect understanding to the different elements of the stories. Still, in the investigation of what the stories have in common, I find the structure of the rites of initiation an important tool in understanding the stories. In the symbol dictionaries many symbols are connected with such rites. The structure of the rite of initiation is very similar to the narrative structure of the folktale and there is a link between Lüthi's protagonist and the test in the rites.

As in AT 302 the animals in the stories test the heroes and they become stronger through the ability to cooperate with the animals. Actually, the meetings are what prepare them for the greatest challenge, the struggle with the monster. The description of the monster role in the story cannot be expressed in better words than in *Penguin's Dictionary of Symbols*:

Monsters symbolize the guardian of a treasure, immortality for example. In other words, they symbolize the sum of the difficulties to be overcome and of obstacles to be surmounted if in the end this material, corporeal or spiritual treasure is to be won. The monster is there to stimulate effort, mastery of fear and

⁷² (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd 1000 Symbols 2002. Page 212)

a display of heroism, and in this guise is to be found in numerous rites of initiation in which the candidate has to prove his capabilities and his worthiness.⁷³

I find the term mastery of fear a key word to understanding fairytales and the positive message of the stories. As the symbolic interpretations can easily be connected with a psychoanalytic view, I have also looked at Bruno Bettelheim's, *The uses of Enchantment*, where he writes about the use of fairytales in therapy for children. He emphasizes the fairy tales as answers to inner struggles, and writes that fairytales can give a structure to children's daydreaming. In this connection overcoming fear is an inner struggle, and the symbols of the fairytales are connected with this journey. In Bettelheim's words:

"They (fairytales) speak about this severe inner pressure in a way that the child unconsciously understands, and – without belittling the most serious inner struggles which growing up entails – offer examples of both temporary and permanent solutions to pressing difficulties."⁷⁴

Another view of the folktales that expands on this theory, is from the collector Jørgen Moe himself who writes that:

The folk poetry is created from the inner life of the people; it's an expression of the people's inherent need for spiritual release and self-expression, because the people didn't compose it to make themselves a name; rather it is air, it is overflowing life that has to be released; it is the source that fights its way to existence. It is need, not intention. It is the inspired experience of longing and the moan from creation⁷⁵

This quote shows the collector's own view on the material he was working with. Moe's view is naturally influenced by the romantic view of peasant life; nevertheless his words describe the universality of the genre from a symbolic point of view.

There are other elements that can be interpreted as symbol images in the Norwegian story, such as the heart in an egg, the duck, church, key and well and the brothers bewitched into stones, but I have chosen to focus on those that shed light on similarities. My interpretation of the symbol images draws a picture of the classical

⁷³ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 667)

⁷⁴ (Bruno Bettelheim The use of Enchantment 1977. Page 6)

⁷⁵ (Ørnulf Hodne Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene 1979. Page 221)

colourful hero of Momotaro and the grey, but more surprising anti-hero that the Ash Lad represents. Also the birds, the pheasant and the raven, underline this image of colourful towards black at the same time as they are links to old mythic worldviews, such as Shinto and Norse mythology.

Symbol images are like circles in the water after a stone is thrown into it. Jan Paul Brudal writes that the unspeakable is best expressed by symbols.

“Where strict logic must give up, coherent symbol images take over. The human brain uses symbol images when it expresses itself creatively, especially in sleep and dreams.”⁷⁶

Differences

Key words: The characters and their attributes

The characters and their attributes can add endless variations to the basic structure of the stories.

Momotaro is a Japanese hero. In Juliet Piggott’s book about Japanese mythology, it says that the term hero was “applied from earliest times to one possessed with superhuman strength and courage and favoured by the gods”.⁷⁷

Momotaro is actually born with superhuman strength as described here. Also he is given rice-cakes, *kibi-dango*, by his parents and these make him ten times stronger. When he shares them with the animals, they get super-strong too.

This section elaborates on the description of the classical hero.

Jørgen Moe describes some elements that characterize the Norwegian folktale style and its heroes, including the Ash Lad:

- “1. They are influenced by Norwegian nature and the simple way of life
2. The character types show confidence and decisiveness The Ash Lad has deep knowledge of his own powers.”⁷⁸

⁷⁶ (Jan Paul Brudal. Det ubevisste språket 1984. Page 11)

⁷⁷ (Juliet Piggott. Japanese Mythology 1982. Page 88)

⁷⁸ (Ørnulf Hodne. Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene 1979. Page 245)

The anti-hero that the Ash Lad is, does really believe in his own strength, even though his surroundings do not always believe in him. The Ash Lad's attributes are totally different from Momotaro's. In short: He wears old clothes and rides an old scruffy horse that is soon exchanged for a wolf. Momotaro is the opposite with new trousers and headband, and a flag proclaiming Japan's best Momotaro.

Another description of the Japanese hero emphasizes how the battle and fighting itself is not the most important virtue, rather nobility of purpose.

“ A Japanese term is *giri* that is literally translated as self-imposed moral obligation with a sentimental impulse”.⁷⁹

Momotaro saves his country from attacks; afterwards he gets a reward from the government, and with treasures from the oni's island he can take care of his old parents.

To sum up some differences:

Japan

Hero

Elements of fighting
connected to external attacks

Landscape: Japan, and an outlying
Island

End of story: taking care of old
parents

Rewarded by the government

Norway

Anti-hero

Domestic affairs connected
to the family

In the deep forest, in an unknown
kingdom

Marriage with a beautiful
princess

Honor from his father, the king

The story of Momotaro has elements that are connected with legend material, and that is where the story does not strictly follow Lüthi's descriptions of what makes a folktale a folktale.

⁷⁹ (Juliet Piggot. Japanese Mythologi 1982. Page 88)

According to Klaus Antoni in the article *Momotaro (The Peach Boy) and the spirit of Japan: Concerning the function of a Fairy Tale in Japanese nationalism of the Early Showa age*, the story of Momotaro has its roots in legend material that has become a tale of magic, and Japanese tradition contains a series of tales in which the motif of an island of demons appears.⁸⁰

The different landscapes in the two stories, tell their own stories. As Japan is an island with many smaller outlying islands, the landscape in the story tells a story about Japan in a fictional way. The definition of place is in a could-have-been-true, setup. In the story of the Ash Lad the kingdom is just a kingdom, the king is just a king and the forest is deep and full of mysteries.

I believe that authorities are an important key word here. Before the Meiji-period, the structure of the Japanese society resembled a feudal structure, where loyalty towards one's superior are really important. The loyalty connected to this system was transferred to a loyalty towards the Emperor and is also connected to Confucian ethics. The moral obligation towards elders and authorities is visible in the way Momotaro is rewarded and how he takes care of his old parents, which is a typical ending in a Japanese Fairy tale.

If Propp had worked with Japanese Fairy tales he would probably have added the function taking care of old parents, to his list. I believe the function can be connected with something called *on* which is defined as a social debt towards other people, especially superiors and parents. "The debt can never really be paid back."⁸¹

In Norway the peasants lived quite far from the government (in Denmark) and developed an independent culture. Respect for authorities is not an important aspect in Norwegian Fairy tales, rather the opposite. The king is often made fool of. I'm sure there are many Japanese folktales that make fools of authorities, but they were not published among the texts that were part of the obligatory education system.

The old peasant society in Norway was built up around marriage as a really important stage in life, and those who didn't marry easily became outsiders. There were

⁸⁰ (Antoni, Klaus (1991). Momotaro (the peachboy) and the spirit of Japan: concerning the function of a fairy tale in Japanese nationalism of the early Showa age. In: *Asian Folklore Studies* 50, no.1 155-188. Page 172)

⁸¹ (Arne Kalland Japans historie. Fra jegersamfunn til økonomisk supermakt 2005. Page 214)

some periods that were regarded among the peasants as periods where humans were more exposed to supernatural danger. These were between birth and christening and between confirmation and marriage. When children reached around 15 years of age, they were confirmed, their clothes changed to adult clothes and many had to start working outside the home on other farms. Many of the heroes in the fairytales are in this vulnerable period between confirmation and marriage.

The Monster

I have written about what the monsters in the stories represent in a universal understanding of their role in the story, as a manifestation of fear to be overcome. Now I will look closer at the monsters in the stories in a cultural connection. The Japanese *oni* is like a giant, but has horns like a devil and can be pink or blue or green. It often wears a tiger skin loincloth. Throughout Japanese folklore, legend and religious apocrypha, certain supernatural beings called *oni* exist which incarnate universal forces, sometimes beneficial, but most often destructive to the human world. Easily moving between realms of the living and the dead, these demonic spirits often interact with luckless humans. A tradition in Japan in February is to throw out some specially prepared beans and cry: 'In with fortune, out with *oni*!' ⁸²

The Norwegian troll is like a giant, very much resembling the mountain and the forest himself, with trees growing on his head etc. They can have three, six and even nine heads. The illustrations of Theodor Kittelsen around the year 1900 are what many Norwegians consider the real image of the troll. It was the scary, but stupid giant from the depths of the forest. The word troll has been used as far back as in Edda, in the Old Norse mythology; an example is this:

A Troll with three heads will always be dragging you (...) ⁸³

According to Antoni we can see that *onis* have represented different enemies of Japan throughout history. The sometimes pink *onis* have also been used as an image of Westerners with pink faces.

⁸² (Stephen Adiss Japanese Ghosts and Demons 1985. Page 94)

⁸³ (Birger Sivertsen For noen troll 2000. Page: 19, my translation)

While the troll in the Norwegian story is still connected to the dangerous forces of nature and its forefathers, which probably were the "jotner" of northern mythologies, in my view it was not easily connected with enemies in war situations. In the story of the Ash Lad, there are no such elements of war and enemies. The troll remains the monster in the midst of the deep forest that the hero must fight to restore harmony. The Ash Lad is there to save his brothers. The fight against the troll proceeds slowly by trying to fool it. With the help of the captured princess, he manages to find out where the troll is hiding his heart and with the help of the three animals, he finds it and by squeezing it, the troll dies.

Momotaro fights the onis in a more militant way; he is like a general leading his soldiers into combat, where they win because of their supernatural strength. (They are favoured by the gods.)

How have the fairytales been used?

Key words: Identity and moral

Fairy tales and the 'spirit' of the nation

In the article by Claus Antoni, which is based on the period after Meiji (1868-1912) and Taisho (1912-1926), the early Showa period (1926-1989), he shows how heroes like Momotaro were used as war propaganda as well as reflecting the 'Japanese spirit'.

"Heroes from legend and history offered perfect identification patterns and images for the propagation of state ideals that were spread through education, the military and war propaganda. Momotaro subtly transmitted to young school pupils that which official Japan looked upon as the goal of its ideological education: through a fairy tale the gate to the 'Japanese spirit' was open."⁸⁴

Momotaro was connected with the ideals of official Japan. The quest for identity was also a quest for the 'Japanese spirit'.

The idea of the 'spirit of the nation' was of course similar to the Norwegian quest for identity and probably has its roots in Herder's ideas.

⁸⁴ (Antoni, Klaus(1991): „Momotaro (the peachboy) and the spirit of Japan: concerning the function of a fairy tale in Japanese nationalism of the early Showa age“. In: *Asian Folklore Studies* 50, no.1 155-188. Page 155)

According to the German Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) each group has its own Volks or Nationalgeist. It is expressed through a language and mentality that reflected a collective historical background.⁸⁵

It is natural to connect Momotaro to the samurai culture. It is an important part of Japanese culture, and the samurai class was important in the feudal system of the Edo period (1600-1867). Even though the Edo period was quite peaceful, many domestic wars were fought throughout history. The aristocratic soldiers represent an important element in Japanese culture and can possibly be the ideal for Momotaro, who acts as a general leading his band of animal soldiers towards the enemy.

When the new modern nation of Japan was rising in the Meiji-period, the samurai class lost the position it had in the feudal-like structure under the shogunate (military leaders). The peasants, who had previously had a local identity, now got a new national identity with the emperor as the central point, and the samurai ideals were chosen as ideals for all Japanese people. The samurai ideals such as courage and loyalty etc. were a cornerstone in the Meiji government's identity process. Identity-building started with the Meiji-period, but continued all the way through the Second World War.

The story of Momotaro the peach boy represents a colourful story of a boy accompanied by three animals, who is as brave as can be, fighting off the dark forces and saving his country from attack.

In both stories, there is a certain moral. In the story of Momotaro, the moral is first of all connected with courage, but also the relation to a demonized enemy, such as the onis. As fairytale enemies are often related to the shadowy parts of the human mind, such demonizing is natural. By entering the realms of darkness within your own soul, a victory over the enemy is a harmonic victory, where the truth of who you really are is the treasure (as described in the chapter about universality). When the fairytale image of the monster is transmitted to real people, it has a more dangerous undercurrent of propaganda. As Antoni's article shows how the image of the Oni was transferred to the image of Westerners, a similar picture of the Chinese people is drawn during the Sino-Japanese war,

⁸⁵ (Bjarne Hodne, Norsk Nasjonalkultur 1995 . Page 20)

where an image was created of the Japanese representing “civilization” as opposed to the “barbaric” culture of the Chinese. This is a traditional technique of dominion, creating a distance between “us” and “the others” often used through Western history for legitimizing dominion and colonization.

In the process of creating identity, the fairytales were part of a larger picture, where old myths and stories were used to create modern myths. From the analysis of Momotaro, it is clear that Momotaro was considered an ideal hero for the Japanese to identify with, in the process of creating an ideology. The ideologists in both Norway and Japan were searching for stories from the past that could tell a story of identity in the present.

Both the story of Momotaro and the story of the Ash Lad have a certain moral that is connected with their universality, and the universality of myths. An example of the moral in the story of the Ash Lad is the charity ethic he shows in his encounters with the animals. Like Momotaro, he has courage, and he relates to the unknown forces in his surroundings. Both the universal layers of the story, including the special moral of the story, and the other layers of cultural references shaped by time and place, were considered valuable in the nation-building process

Other elements of moral in the story are Momotaro’s filial duty to his parents, and the loyalty of his companions in following him on his dangerous journey to save his country.

Search and find

425B Issunboshi, One Inch boy,

- I) Hero’s birth. Because of a hasty wish of the parents, One-Inch boy is born to them.
- II) His adventures. He goes to a wealthy household and asks to be taken into service. His voice is heard but he is hard to find. Finally he is found beside a wooden clog at the entrance.
- III) (Ogres. One-Inch boy climbs upon a tree and from its heights he taunts some ogres by adding some phrases to their song. They get angry. He is spotted and swallowed by one of them. He stabs the ogre from inside and is disgorged. The

ogres are scared away, leaving a treasure hammer by which any wish can be fulfilled.)

- IV) (Disenchantment. By wishing on the hammer the hero becomes a handsome man of normal size and usually marries the princess.) The version listed in Otogizoshiki which therefore must have been circulated in the 16th and 17th century has him claiming the hand of the princess by a trick, which is the same as Type 425 A.

AT 425 the search for the lost husband

For certain reasons a girl is promised to a monster (white bear, wolf), a transformed prince who is a man at night. After a while she visits her home, but is warned against listening to her mother's advice. She breaks the prohibition (kisses him, shines a light on him) and loses him. She undergoes a sorrowful wandering to recover him, and receives the magic objects she needs and is helped to reach the ogre's castle, where he is living with a witch. She succeeds in disenchanting him and regains him. The false bride is unveiled and dies.

Issunboshi, One Inch boy	The search for the lost husband (Østenfor sol og vestenfor måne)
Preparatory section	Preparatory section
1. Initial situation. An old man and woman have lived all their lives without having children having a child to take care of them in their old age.	1. Initial situation. A farmer had many beautiful children, but he was very poor.
They decide to go to Kannon every day to pray.	2. One of the family members leaves home. (Absention) A white bear comes two Thursdays in a row and asks if he can have the youngest daughter. In return the family shall be as rich as they now are poor. The father and the daughter accept the bear's wish after some
The woman gets pregnant and after a while she gives birth to a child with the size of a bean. They call him Mamesuke.	hesitation, third time.
Mamesuke grows up and when he	

is seventeen, he still has the size of a bean.

II. Main action

Aa. (Desire to have something)

Mamesuke asks permission to leave and declares he will come back as a rich man.

î (Departure.) and C (beginning counteraction) He is acting towards his own wish and leaves home. His mother sends with him some flour to eat.

G. (Transference) After a while he comes to a wine-makers house.

M. (Difficult task) He wants to ask for work, but he is so small that no one sees him.

N. (Solution) He hides inside a wooden clog at the entrance and cries out:

3. The hero gets an interdiction.

(Interdiction) The girl is taken to a beautiful castle. After a while, she asks the white bear if she can visit her family and he says she can, but she must never speak with her mum alone or take advice from her.

4. The interdiction is violated. She takes the mother's advice and brings a light to look at the nightly visitor. He is a handsome young man, and he wakes up, when she looks at him.

II. Main action

A villainy: An evil stepmother has cast a spell on the prince and now he has to travel to a castle east of the sun and west of the moon and marry a troll-princess.

C. (Beginning counteraction). The next morning both the bear and the castle is gone, and she starts walking.

D. (First function of the donor) After walking for many days she comes to a mountain and outside the mountain an old hag is playing with an apple of gold,

E. (Hero's reaction) The girl asks for directions.

F. (Magical agents) She is given directions, a horse to ride and the apple of gold to take with her.

D, E and F is repeated three more times and she meets two other old

”How do you do? Please let me fire up the kettle”

He is discovered and gets the job to tend the fire under the kettle, and he is good at it.

Aa. (Desire to have something) and M. (Difficult task) There were three daughters in that family and Mamesuke liked the middle one very much, so he wanted to have her.

N.(Solution)In the night he smears the flour he got from his mum around the mouth of the middle daughter. Next morning he is crying and he is asked why he is crying. The middle daughter is accused for eating the flour and as a payment he gets her.

+(Return) Mamesuke brings her home to his mother and father and she is very unhappy and wants to kill him.

T. The hero is given new appearance(Transfiguration): When Mamesuke gets home he takes a bath and in the bath he cracks and turns into a very handsome man.

K. (Initial lack liquidated) The girl and Mamesuke promise to take good care of the old man and woman for the rest of their lives.

hags, gets a yarn spoon and a spinning wheel of gold, a horse to ride and directions were to go.

The last woman tells her to go to the eastern wind.

G, (Guidance) She gets to ride on the eastern wind, the westernwind, the southernwind and at last the northernwind takes her to the castle west of the sun and east of the moon.

M. Difficult task. Fooling the trolls. She plays with the apple of gold outside the castle and the Troll-princess wants to buy it. She exchanges it for the possibility to stay with the prince during the night.

N negative Before the Prince goes to bed he is given a drink of sleeping medicine and he is impossible to wake up.

M and Nneg, are repeated. The girl exchanges the yarn spoon for staying with the prince during the night and he is just sleeping.

M The third time she exchanges the spinning wheel and someone has warned the prince, so he does not drink the sleeping medicine.

N (Solution) He is awake and they make a plan to fool the trolls.

M.Difficult task. The next morning he declares that he wants to marry

the woman who can wash his shirt with spots of tallow on it.

Nneg. The Troll-princess tries and it gets dirtier, the Troll's mother tries and it gets even dirtier and many other trolls try and it turns all black.

N (Soulution) Then he asks for the girl and she washes the shirt shining white.

J.(Victory) All the trolls get so angry that they cracks.

T. Transfiguration: The prince's spell is broken and he is no longer a white bear during the day.

W . Wedding. The Prince and the girl get married and move to a place far away from the castle east of the sun and west of the moon.

Similarities

Structure and actions

There are many versions of 425, and the most common is the version about Issun Boshi which is actually 425B where he fights some ogres and gets the hammer that can grant wishes.

In the version I am working with, the hero is called Mamesuke and he is claiming the hand of the princess by a trick and has the number 425A, which is the same as the Norwegian one.

From Propp's functions the stories go like this:

Mamesuke

I, 1, II, Aa, C, î, G, **M**, **N**, Aa, M, N, +, **T**, K

East of the sun, West of the moon

I, 1, 2, 3, 4, II, A, C, (DEFx3), G, (MNnegx2), **M, N, M, N, J, T, W**

The Norwegian tale contains several more sequences than the Japanese one, both in the initial situation and in the main action. I find the functions M and N connected with difficult tasks as central in understanding the similarities of the stories, but the most important function is as I see it, the function T that is transformation.

By reading through the stories for the first time, they appear strangely different, the story of Mamesuke is quite short, and also quite funny, while the Norwegian story is long and full of magical sequences. What they have in common though, is that they might be described as strange kinds of lovestories, where the male in the story does not have an ordinary shape.

Another similarity is connected with the initial situation, and the motivation for the heroes to leave home. The motivation is actually connected with wealth, as the white bear promises the girl's family that they will become as rich as they now are poor, if they let the youngest girl come with him.

Similarly, Issun Boshi leaves home with the declaration that he is going to come home as a rich man. From a symbolic reading of the parents' point of view in this situation; the girl who is riding into the unknown on a white bear, and the boy with a size of a bean; could be understood from an emotional level, what it feels like for the parents to let children start their own life, away from the safety of the home. In the analysis of the story of Momotaro and the Ash lad, I used the rites of initiation, as a way of understanding the journey of the hero, they need to be tested to find their real identity and their strength. The comparison of the rite of initiation works on these two fairytales as well.

The main characters in the two stories are the male and the female as a part of a love story. The girl in the Norwegian story has followed the white bear and lives with him in a castle in the forest, but her real journey starts when she breaks a prohibition. She does not keep the promise she has given to the white bear, and by breaking the prohibition, she gets a glimpse of the white bear's real identity, as well as she loses him. Even the castle they lived in disappears. She is now lost in the forest and all she knows is that her prince is in a castle west of the moon and east of the sun, about to marry a Troll-princess. And as we are in a fairytale, we know that she is not going to give up, she is going to go for the impossible task set up for her.

Here is an encounter with some of the message of a fairytale, the greater and more difficult task, the more divine or unearthly help is given. The only skills she needs are courage and the ability never to let go of the goal she has put up for herself.

Mamesuke has declared to his parents that he is going to come home as a rich man, and the difficult task he has to overcome is first how to get a job with his size?

How he solves his difficult task is quite humourous. He places himself inside a wooden clog in a winemaker's house and cries; please put me on the fire. That is a way to get people's attention, and he does get a job to tend the fire. First difficult task is solved. Always keep your mind set on the goal you have given yourself, both the stories seem to say.

Other similarities in the two stories are connected with the fact that they use tricks to win their spouses. As the girl finally after a long journey with a lot of magical help, reaches the castle, she has to win the prince back from the trollprincess. She has fought to be alone with the prince and he has come up with a plan; he will only marry the one who can wash his shirt shining white. In the story it is like as if there are different contracts, that is absolutely natural in the surroundings of the fairytale. The first contract was that the girl should live with the white bear for a certain time, without knowing his real identity. If she discovered his real identity before the time was out, then the prince had to marry a trollprincess. That was the contract. All of a sudden the prince can make a new contract; I will only marry the one who can wash my shirt white.

A similar strange demand is when Mamesuke falls in love with the winemaker's middle daughter, and then he takes some flour that his mother has given him on his journey and smears it over the girls face in the night. When she wakes up, he accuses her of having eaten the flour that his mother gave him. In return he gets to marry the girl. It is a similar trick, and the deal that he gets to marry her because of it. The main message here is connected with the protagonist journey, whereas it seems like the world is made for the hero, and each act of courage or wit is rewarded, and all the "coincidences" are parts of the fairytale logic.

Both the stories are characterized by action and reaction, in a time-level that is different from real-life situations, because the reactions comes immedeatly. It is an abstack

world, where the story is driven by the action of the hero, always according to the goal he or she has set up, and the way he comes in terms with obstacles.

Transformation

Transformation is a really important function in both the stories. The rite of initiation itself resembles a transformation. From child to grown-up, from vulnerable to finding one's identity through the solution of the obstacles put up. In these two stories the transformation is connected to an actual shape-shift. Mamesuke goes from tiny to normal shape, and the white bear becomes a prince again.

The will of the hero, to conquer the elements of fear(monster, impossible tasks) and bring the light back into the world. Lüthi's descriptions of the folk tale style is clearly presents in both the stories:

The characters are one-dimensional, they do not have any depth or inner emotion, but show their feelings through their actions. Nothing separates them from the magical elements they are surrounded with, there's is no puzzlement towards for instance the personification of the North-wind in the Norwegian story, or the size of the main character in the Japanese story.

This version of Issun Boshi or the story of Mamesuke published by Yanagita Kunio, has no monster or Oni in it, but there are other versions of Issun Boshi, where Onis are present, and that Issun Boshi fights them despite of his size.

The lack of monster emphasize the difficult task for Mamesuke. His size, makes ordinary things more difficult. The size is the main characteristics of the story and adds the humor and poetry to the story.

The monsters in the Norwegian story are the evil stepmother, who has cast the spell upon the prince, and the Troll princess and her mother who cracks of anger when they are fooled by the prince. The harmony is restored in both stories by a crack, when the Troll cracks, and when Mamesuke cracks into a normal shape when taking a bath.

From the two stories, which I like to call strange lovestories, what becomes visible through the comparison is that the stories are dealing with similar topics, in a similar way, and the structure and message of the stories are similar. What is the message then? When the hero keeps faith in his or her destination and at the same time, stays open for

magical aid in the surroundings, he or she will eventually succeed. The obstacles are there to make the hero get in touch with his or her own strength.

The same message can be told in a funny and poetic way or in a way that includes a lot of wonder, magic and strange events, such as talking to and riding on the different winds of all the cardinal points.

Since this is a love story, the transformation that takes place is within a relation, and with the help of the relation.

In between similarities and differences

Symbol images

In AT 302 the stories were about the archetypal hero who fights the monster, while AT 425 is about love and transformation. Why is it about love, why does it describe an encounter with a spouse that has a strange shape? To start this analysis I will first of all look up the word transformation in the dictionary of symbols. The book *1000 symbols* does not include the word transformation, but the word shape-shifting has a similar meaning as transformation. The shape-shifting that is described is connected to voluntarily shape-shifting, such as the shaman by deep devotion can transform to an animal shape. Another example is the Japanese tanuki, who may, among other things transform to a teapot or a human being. Shape-shifting is also connected with the trickster such as Loki in Northern mythology who often used his ability to shape-shift to make his tricks. In the two stories of AT 425A it is not a transformation the hero is in control of, rather it takes place as part of the reward in the end of the story. The shape-shifting and transformation in fairytales is a common theme, very often connected to the type of shape that is created by a bad spell, whereas the hero's journey in the end leads to the break of the spell.

The little Mamesuke is born by a hasty wish from his parents; their wish to have a child even if he was as small as a bean. And their wish was granted as it often is in a fairytale. From the Dictionary of symbols the bean symbolizes sunshine in mineral form, the embryo.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 74)

The embryo symbolizes potentiality and the state of non-manifestation, as well as the sum of all possible existences. In short, the bean symbolizes potential, but also future male children in many traditions. In the rites of spring they symbolized the earliest gift from the underworld, the first offerings from the dead to the living, the sign of their fertility, that is to say their incarnation.⁸⁷

A Japanese tradition is connected with throwing beans in February, out with Oni, in with fortune to drive evil spirits out of home. The symbolic interpretation of Mamesuke's extraordinary size is connected to potential, and good fortune. It is also connected to the tradition of supernatural birth of the hero, which as well is a common theme in fairytales.

The symbolic understanding of the girl who leaves her family on the back of a bear can be connected to the child's separation from the parents, as the rites of initiation always demands that the hero is separated from the group.

The bear is sometimes held to be the ancestor of the human race: In Canada the Algonquin Indian called the bear 'Grandfather'. This last belief appears to have inspired the wide spread myth of bears carrying of women, who live a married life with their ravishers. In Siberia a bear is present in the initiation ceremony. The bear is also a lunar manifestation of the divine, and in relationship with the instincts. Given its strength, Jung considers it the symbol of the dangerous aspect of the unconscious.⁸⁸

The bear might be connected with the dangerous forces of the unconscious, and the danger of discovering strength from within and the danger that is present in the hero's journey.

Mamesuke's first job is to tend the fire in the winemakers house.

"According to I CHING, fire corresponds to south, the colour red, summer and the heart. This last correspondence is constant, perhaps because the fire symbolizes the passions (and especially those of love and hate), perhaps because it symbolizes the spirit."⁸⁹

While Mamesuke was tending the fire, he fell in love with the middle daughter in the house. His actions aroused his own love, but the girl's hate, as she considered it unfortunate to be married to a boy with the size of a bean. Another famous transformation

⁸⁷ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 350)

⁸⁸ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 75)

⁸⁹ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 379)

fairytale is the Grimm-brother story of the frogprince who makes the princess so angry, she throws him at the wall, and he cracks and becomes a handsome prince.

The investigation of the symbolic meaning of the elements in the stories is sometimes to be compared with analyzing dreams, the symbols can have multiple meanings and are not meant to give exact and accurate answers, more sketching up possible understandings. But there is one thing that the story of Mamesuke has in common with both the story of the frogprince and the girl who travels east of the sun and west of the moon, the male in a strange shape is searching up the female, as if they have the key to the transformation.

In the Norwegian story the colour white appears two times, as it is a white bear, and a shirt must be washed white. “White can symbolize the colour of the cardinal points for both east and west, two distant and mysterious points at which the sun is born and dies each day.”⁹⁰

It is interesting that a symbolic interpretation of the colour white is linked to the cardinal point since they play an important part of the fairytale. The castle that the prince is kept in is east for the sun, and west for the moon, wherever that may be. Another symbolic interpretation of the colour white goes like this:

“White acts upon our souls like absolute silence.... This silence is not something lifeless, but replete with life-potential.... It is a nothing filled with childish happiness or, in better terms, a nothingness before birth, and before the beginning of all things.”⁹¹

The castle is where the prince either is doomed to a life married to a troll-princess, or where he can be free of the spell and the transformation can take place. A transformation can also be symbolic for a birth, or a total transformation of identity. The prince himself has not the key to the transformation, it is the courage and the deep wish from the girl, that finally leads to the happy ending.

Mamesuke has brought the downcast girl home and when he takes a bath, he cracks and becomes a handsome man. According to the symbol dictionary bathing is often connected with ritual purification. It may be claimed that throughout the world, the bath is

⁹⁰ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 1105)

⁹¹ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996. Page 1106)

the prime rite which, as it were, sets the seal upon those milestones in the human life, birth, puberty and death. Mamesuke simply becomes a real man.

I have now looked closer at elements in the stories that mainly are connected to similarities, and universality. There are many other elements in the stories that have symbolic layers of meaning, but I have chosen only a few, to highlight the similarities. The symbolic meanings of words give of a glimpse of the rich poetic language of the stories, and of many possible understandings connected with old rites and customs.

Differences

The characters and their attributes

The story of Mamesuke has a beginning and an ending similar with to story of Momotaro. A married couple, who do not have any children to take care of them when they are old, go to Kannon to pray, and their prayers are heard. A child is born, but in the opposite of Momotaro, who is extraordinary strong, this boy is still a size of a bean when he is at the age of seventeen. The great emphasis placed on the child's duty to take care of their old parents is connected with the loyalty and fialty expected from children and that is a difference from the Norwegian story. When the trolls have cracked, the girl and the prince get married and move far away from the castle east of the sun and west of the moon, and the parents are not mentioned.

Another aspect with a clear cultural reference is connected to Kannon who is the goddess of mercy and the god of compassion. "Kannon can be translated as the one who sees all / hears all. Kannon Boddhisatwa listens to the prayers, cries of those in difficulty in the earthly realm.

The worship started in 7th century soon after Buddhism came to Japan. The goddess seven heads are symbolic shedding of sweetness and mercy in all directions.”⁹²

In Julie Piggots, Japanese mythology, it is said that before the conception of Issun Bosshi,

⁹² (www.onmarkproductions.com/html/kannon.shtml, 070706)

“...they (the old couple) had prayed at their local shrine for a child, even if it should be only the size of the end of a finger. The gods took their prayer literally.”⁹³

Praying to Kannon shows old customs connected to Japan and Buddhism, and is a cultural reference. Kannon is a Japanese name for a Bodhisattva commonly worshipped in other Asian countries as well.

“The fairytale East of the sun and west of the moon was written down in Telemark in Norway and first time published by Asbjørnsen in, *Norske Folkeeventyr*, in 1844.”⁹⁴

Telemark was one of the selected areas for the collection of folktales, and it carries the typical characteristics of the folktale approach done by Asbjørnsen and Moe. The poor peasant family, is the starting point of the extraordinary adventure. And always is the youngest daughter of the family the most beautiful and attractive one. She is not only beautiful, but shows spirit of self-sacrifice for the wellbeing, or survival of the rest of the family.

In Japan the middle daughter is often the most attractive, connected with a cultural understanding of the eldest one who has too much responsibility and the youngest one is considered to be too rebellious. This understanding is also reflected in the novel, the *Makioka sisters* by Junichiro Tanizaki.

The Norwegian story has magical agents such as a yarn spoon and a spinning wheel of gold, magical versions of ordinary working tools for spinning and weaving clothes from old times in Norway. The castle of the Trolls is in a zone that is not ordinarily reached by humans (west of the sun east of the moon), is probably connected with the realms of the supernatural beings, also ”jotner” and the ”hulder” who live parallel lives to humans. The surrounding nature was powerful, and as it is with many mythical forces, they have both the power to give blessing and to destroy. When the fairytale hero moves in the realm of the supernatural, the danger is generally overcome, while in the legends, the opposite is often the case.

The bath that Mamesuke takes when his transformation takes place, might be connected with the traditional bath-culture in Japan, which is also connected with the fact

⁹³ (Juliet Piggot Japanese Mythology 1982. Page 92)

⁹⁴ (<http://hint.no/abh/eventyranalyse.vestenformaane.htm> , 070706)

that Japan has hot springs and the hot bath in the evening has been a traditional part of Japanese everyday life. The famous animationfilm, *Spirited Away* takes place in a supernatural bathhouse where different gods come to purify themselves and enjoy the relaxation of hot water with fresh herbs. The characters in the film, show an ability to transform themselves from one shape to another, which is a normal skill in the realms of the supernatural. An example of transformation and purification in the film is when the rivergod, who impossible to recognize because he is full of garbage and pollution, takes a bath and is purified. Afterwards he can leave the bathhouse in his real appearance.

How have the fairytales been used?

Identity and moral

What I will do now is to analyse the Japanese story of AT 425 according to the ideology of the Meiji-process, and see what parts of the story that in a way plays the same tunes as the ideologist in the Meiji-period.

The comparison so far has shown that the story is a universal expression, also lingered in the special moral of the fairytale as is connected with myths, and this moral, together with layers of cultural references is used to create national identity. It is like a box within a box within a box, where the small one is moral and the bigger one is cultural references and the biggest one is identity.

From the Rescript on Education:

“(...) Ye, our subjects be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters, as husband and wife be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourself in modesty and moderation.”⁹⁵

I will only short mention the fialty towards parents, that strongly influnces the Japanese fairytales in general, and the story of Mamesuke who's story ends with the fact that he and his wife take care of his parents.

Another aspect of the fairytale that I find corresponds with the ideology is connected with independence. Even though Mamesuke is only the size of a bean, he still

⁹⁵ (Carol Gluck, Japan`s Modern Myths 1985. Page 121)

wants to be able work and have an income, whereas in the end this independence leads to filialty, as he uses it for the benefit of his parents.

The modernization process in Japan happened in a very short time and the big changes also required an enormous effort from each of the inhabitants. For the Japanese to accept and adjust to the changes that was required, it was important that they personally gave what they had to the society. The independence and ability to make a living, corresponds with the wish from the government for economically independent members in a family state, the *ie*-system, where the nation was an enlarged shape of the family structure, with the Emperor as a "father". The economic independence that was ideal, was within the structure of the nation. The opposite was a kind of independence that was connected with what was considered a dangerous Western preoccupation with personal success and materialism. The independence that Mamesuke gains, is immediately made a benefit for the parents, and represents in a way a benefit for the society at large.

The typical structure of the tales of magic is connected to a domestic family structure. Since the ideologist has chosen the picture of the Empire as an enlarged picture of the family, the fairytales in general can easily correspond with such a symbolic metaphor, and the story of Mamesuke also follows the pattern of family structure.

What I find special in the story of Mamesuke is the independence that leads to transformation, and the repeated message of loyalty and filial piety that is exemplified in the end of the story, with the taking care of parents, which might be a function number 32, a special Japanese function added to Propp's list of 31 functions. The idea of loyalty and filial piety was the tune the ideologists were singing through the whole period. Here is another quote from the Rescript;

"Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lay the source of Our Education."

The fairytales show how the combination of the universal moral and the specific cultural expressions have been used to elaborate national ideas, by the use of specially chosen elements from the past. In different ways, the past and the fairytales were used to legitimate contemporary ideas.

Guidance to Tokoyonokuni (The other world)

AT 470 Dragon Palace...Urashima Taro

- I) A visit to the undersea world. A grateful sea god (goddess) invites the hero, who has saved the life of a turtle, to visit his submerged palace.
- II) The Journey. The hero sees many extraordinary sights under the sea.
- III) Marriage to the sea god's daughter. After three years, the hero is overcome by a strong longing to visit his home. He is given a little box to take along which he is told not to open if he wants to come back again.
- IV) The Return. When he gets to home, he has been away many centuries. All is changed and he knows no one.
- V) Death. When he opens the box he ages and instantly dies.

AT 470 Friends in life and death

Two friends pledge themselves never to part. One of them dies. The living friend invites the dead one to visit him (at his wedding). Afterwards he returns with him beyond the grave. On the way they see many strange sights, which the dead friend explains. On a seashore the living friend must wait, and falls asleep. When he returns home, he has been away for centuries; all is changed and he knows no one. The next day he dies by falling down from a tree.

The story of Urashima Taro, the fisher lad (Ozaki)	Friends in life and death
I. Preparatory section	I. Preparatory section
Initial situation: Urashima Taro is unmarried and lives with his mother. The mother wants him to get married, but Urashima thinks he is too poor to have a wife.	3.2 An inverted form of interdiction represented by an order or a suggestion:
	Two good friends promise that they shall not be separated, either in life or death.
II. Main action	4. (Interdiction is violated)
A.a (Lack.) Lack of money and	One of the two friends dies.

lack of fish to sell. Urashima has to get fish every day to sell and buy food for his mum.

D. (First function of the donor.)

One day while he is out fishing he catches a turtle on the hook.

E. (The hero's reaction). He frees the turtle from the hook and tells it to disappear because it scares away all the fish.

Function D and E is repeated altogether three times. Urashima fishes until evening, but catches no fish, only the same turtle three times. Each time he sends it away.

D. (First function of the donor.) A boat approaches Urashima's fishing boat. It's a messenger from the Princess of Ryugu (The dragon kingdom at the bottom of the sea.) and she wants to see Urashima.

E. (The hero's reaction) Urashima refuses to follow because he will not leave his mother, but the messenger says his mum is taken good care of.

G. (Guidance). He enters the boat which sinks into the water and takes him down to the world at the bottom of the sea.

The Princess asks him to stay for three days, and then he can return home. Many beautiful things happen while he is there.

II. Main action

A.a (Lack). The hero's friend is dead.

W. Wedding. The hero is getting married. Before the wedding the bridegroom goes to the graveyard to tell his dead friend to come to the wedding.

Motivation: the promise they have given each other.

î. The hero leaves home. Since the dead friend has come to the wedding, they decide that the other hero shall follow his friend to his world. Motivation: Curiosity and the promise.

G. (Guidance) The dead friend leads him through a gate, after which they pass starving animals with plenty to eat, and fat healthy animals with almost nothing to eat. His friend says it is a parable on greed and gratefulness.

O. Unrecognized arrival.

After falling asleep beside a lake of shining light, the dead friend takes the hero back to this world. He goes back to the church and his home. Everything has changed and he finds out that 400 years have passed.

K. Lack liquidated. He climbs up into a big tree to look around, but when he wants to go down again, he falls and dies because he is so old.

Three years pass and Urashima decides to go home.

F. (provision or receipt of magical agent.) Before he leaves, the Princess gives him a three-tiered jewel box. He may open it in case of need.

O. (Unrecognized arrival.) He comes to his old village and everything is changed. He asks a man if he knows of Urashima and the man answers that he knows a story from his grandfather about a man named Urashima who went to the Dragon King's palace and never returned.

F. The hero acquires the use of a magical agent. Urashima opens the lid of the first box where he finds a crane's feather. Out of the next box comes a puff of white smoke and Urashima turns into an old man. In the third box there is a mirror where Urashima can see that he has become an old man.

T. (Transfiguration) While he is looking in the mirror, the feather attaches itself on his back. He transforms to a crane flies up into the air and circles around his mother's grave.

K. (Lack liquidated). While he's flying in the sky, the turtle comes to the beach to see him.

(It is said to be the origin of the Crane and Turtle Dance at Ise.)

Time - a shifting image of motionless eternity.

St. Augustine

Similarities

Structure and action

Urashima Taro:

1-Aa-î-(D-Ex3)-D-E-G-F-O-F-T-K

Friends in life and death:

1-3.2-4-Aa-W-î-G-O-K

I have especially marked the functions G (guidance) O (unrecognized arrival) because I consider them central functions in the two stories, and functions that link them together thematically. Normally the function G is not considered an important function, but these two fairytales are also a bit out of the ordinary, even in the world of tales of magic. The reason I found this function to be important is that both heroes are guided to another world, either by the dead friend or the messenger from the princess. Function O connected to unrecognized arrival is also a function that shows important similarities in the stories.

Both stories have lack as the starting point for the stories, represented by lack of fish and lack of a friend.

In the book *The Japanese Psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy tales in Japan*, Hayao Kawai describes the situation where Urashima sits in his boat without catching any fish as a form of regression, a type of regression that leads to contact with the subconscious.

“(...) regression could seed future development or generate a sprout of new life. Therefore, it is quite understandable why fairy tales - which reflect human psychic development – often begin by describing a regressive phenomenon.”⁹⁶

The Norwegian hero invites the dead friend to his wedding. He goes to the churchyard and knocks on the grave and asks him to come. When the wedding is nearly over, he joins the friend back in the churchyard, and through a mixture of promise and

⁹⁶ (Hayao Kawai *The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan* 1996. Page 92)

curiosity he follows his friend to his world. He is told to take a piece of mold from the churchyard and put it on his head and then the journey into the world of the dead begins.

It might be understood as a form of regression or at least an immature action, when the Norwegian hero leaves his own wedding with a friend, even though he is a dead friend. It might also well be that the dead friend in some way represented the hero's youth or childhood that he is reluctant to leave behind.

A similar aspect is connected with Urashima, who lives with his mother and refuses to get married because he thinks he is too poor to have a wife. Something is holding him back from entering the next stage in life.

Both characters have a will, as Urashima wants to stay unmarried and catch fish to sell and buy food, and the boy in the Norwegian story wants to keep the promise to his friend, but the will they both have does not lead them forward in this world. It takes them to another world.

This time the Japanese fairytale is the longest one with most sequences. The Norwegian story is short, and structurally it does not correspond to Propp's order of functions. The wedding is in the beginning of the story, there is no villain and there are no difficult tasks, and it ends with the hero's death instead of the usual happy ending. Even though the Japanese story is longer with more sequences, it also lacks both the villain and the difficult tasks.

This pair of fairytales is structurally different from the pairs of AT 302 and AT 425. In the previous analyses I found the rite of initiation valuable in the comparison connected with the structure and with the development of the hero in separation, through danger and then to a new stage in life. This time I find the archetype of the puer aeternus, the boy who stays forever young; a mythical image that shows similarities between the two heroes. If the rite of initiation is connected with the eternal cycle of birth, puberty and death, as the cycle of nature, the puer aeternis archetype is connected with mythic material, since when the hero dies he becomes eternal, as in the story of Jesus on the cross.

The two heroes become eternal in similar and different ways: The similar way is that their story becomes a myth because of their extraordinary journey. Another similarity is their story in the world that they left, the ordinary world. Urashima is the fisher lad who went to the Dragon King's palace and never returned; the hero in the Norwegian story must

be the boy who left his own wedding and went to the churchyard never to return. The difference is in what happens to them after they return. In this version of Urashima he becomes a crane who meets his princess again as a turtle, and as an eternal boy and eternal girl they both fly into the sky above Urashima's mother's grave. As love in the fleeting world will disappear, love in the eternal world is everlasting. However, in other versions of the story of Urashima, he dies after his return, just like the Norwegian hero.

The Norwegian hero comes back after 300 years and climbs up in a tree to look around, then when about to climb down he falls and dies. Both heroes return, and they think everything is the same as it was. It is like the time in the other world that went very slowly. When they return, the time of the ordinary world catches up with them, and they get old in an instant.

According to Lüthi, the typical folktale is connected with style, form and message. But what would the message be if it were possible to crystallize one similar message in the two stories?

In a fairytale with a more classical structure as in the two previous pairs I have analyzed, the real reward is connected with the hero's ability to get in touch with his own strength to know who he really is. The structure is connected with leaving on a journey, and after the journey, they return home, but what happens here is that when the heroes return, they are not recognized by anyone, almost as if they have no identity at all, because their families died 300 or 400 years ago. It is, in a way, the opposite of what happens to the ordinary hero. Maybe it is possible to say that the two heroes are more like shadows of heroes, that undertake adventurous journeys, but are not rewarded, at least not in this world. Or maybe the knowledge of the eternal makes it difficult to return to the fleeting, which is also a common theme in myths.

One might say that the message in the stories is connected to a relation between poverty and abundance, since the poor Urashima experiences the greatest abundance in the other world. In a similar but different way, the Norwegian story deals with poverty and abundance which can be connected with greed and gratefulness.

But, most of all, the stories are about different realms, and about different time perceptions in the relation between the eternal and the fleeting.

In between similarities and differences

Symbol images

As transformation was a very important key to understanding the previous fairytale pairs, I believe time can be a key word here. What is time from a symbolic point of view?

Time is often symbolized by the wheel, by the twelve signs of the zodiac, describing the circle of life as they move around, and, generally speaking, by any circular shape. The centre of such circles is then regarded as the motionless aspect of existence, the pivot that makes the motion of existence possible, the one contrasting the other like time with eternity.⁹⁷

What does the symbol of time say about the two versions of AT 470? It might be understood as the relation between the wheel and the pivot, where the ordinary world is the wheel and the otherworld is closer to the timeless pivot that accelerates everything.

Both heroes intend to stay for only a short while in the other world. But the Norwegian hero falls asleep and Urashima, who wants to stay for three days, stays for three years instead.

From the Muromachi period in Japan, in the Otogi zoshi, there is an interesting image of the Dragon Palace: “there is a spring scene in the east window, summer in the south, autumn in west and a winter scene in the north window.”⁹⁸

This image elaborates a different time aspect in the other realm that also has a connection with the time aspect of dreams.

This story of Urashima starts when he is sitting and fishing in his boat on the sea.

“According to Shabistari, the ocean is the heart; its shores gnosis; its shells, language, and the pearls which they contain, ‘the knowledge of the heart,’ the hidden meaning of language.”⁹⁹

The abundance Urashima experiences in the palace under the sea is a great contrast to the poverty in his real life. Also, he is united with the beautiful daughter of the

⁹⁷ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996 . Page 1008)

⁹⁸ (Hayao Kawai The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan 1996. Page 102)

⁹⁹ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, The Penguin Dictionary of symbols 1996 Page 837)

Dragon King. Urashima has the most beautiful experiences under the sea, but when he comes home, everything that he knew is gone.

A symbolic understanding of the whole journey could be that Urashima travels within his own heart, where he finds great abundance, as opposed to the poverty he experiences in the real-life situation.

Kawai describes the sea like the unconscious and the other world like an inner world. He describes what happens to Urashima as: “His sense of time was altered from the moment he stepped into the unconscious world and met a woman. That timelessness in the unconscious has been emphasized by analytical psychologists. We always experience it in our dreams. Past and present get mixed up, and it is not unusual to experience a long span of time within in a moment.”¹⁰⁰

Symbolic interpretation is not made to provide answers to what’s true or not, rather it is a way of sketching possible meanings connected with a symbolic view of things, and that is not an accurate science. I believe rather that it is connected with abstractions of feelings, which is one of the languages of the fairytale and myth. It is also connected with a pantheistic worldview, where everything is alive, and has a soul or spirit, such as the mythical Japanese and Chinese concept of sea gods or Dragon Kings, whose wrath was responsible for storms, who had palaces at the bottom of the sea described as beautiful, magical places where lost treasures could be found.¹⁰¹

A similar concept existed among the Celts, and probably many other places on earth.

“The sea can appear to be another world or kingdom; the Celts believed their shores were beaten by waves emanating from a mysterious place.”

Some elements that are repeated in connection to symbolic interpretations in general, include symbols that show connections to the cycle of life, very often connected with birth and rebirth, fertility and other elements associated with the rhythm of nature. Other elements that repeatedly appear are connected to manifestations of different spirits that inhabit nature.

¹⁰⁰ (Hayao Kawai The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan 1996. Page 101)

¹⁰¹ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd 1000 Symbols 2002. Page 42)

What the Norwegian hero experiences in the other world, is that he sees a parable of greed and gratefulness symbolized by starving cows with plenty to eat and healthy cows with almost nothing to eat.

“In the Ancient Egyptian pantheon the figure of Hathor sums up all these different aspects of the cow. She was fertility, wealth, rebirth, the Mother, heavenly mother of the Sun, and also the wife of the Sun, ‘bull of his own mother’. She was nurse of the King of Egypt; she was the very essence of rebirth and the hope of survival since she was ‘the ruler and indeed the body of the sky, the living soul of trees.’”¹⁰²

This reference to worship of the cow (or other animals) that provide food (and survival) might be an expression of gratitude, also linked with old rites, where the bliss of nature and the fertility of humans, soil and animals were not taken for granted. The parable in the story also shows the opposite of gratitude, connected to greed, which is part of the dark side of human emotional life that probably has always existed.

In the story of Urashima, the princess of the sea god comes to him in the shape of a turtle. An image of the turtle as a figure that comprises a whole cosmography and the whole universe on its shell is a widespread image of the symbolic understanding of the turtle. Also the turtle is slow, which in turn is related to time, and that shows that in the whole of the universe, the way we experience time is only one out of many, as there exists a timeless core connected with eternity.

The Norwegian hero travels to the underworld, the world of the dead.

Norse deities, called Vanir, lived in the underworld along with the elves, but this may not have been the same place as Hel – in early Scandinavian mythology, the name of the home of the dead and its goddess – which was believed to be a dark and noisome place of death that was thought to be haunted by serpents.¹⁰³

There are different images of the underworld, or the home of the dead, just as there are many examples throughout history of journeys to the beyond, such as the epos of Gilgamesh and Dante’s *The Divine Comedy* etc.

In this fairytale the hero comes to a shining lake in the underworld.

¹⁰² (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *The Penguin Dictionary of symbols* 1996 237)

¹⁰³ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd *1000 Symbols* 2002. Page 52)

“Lakes symbolize the Earth’s eye, through which the inhabitants of the underworld are able to gaze upon humans, animals, plants and so on.

Lakes were also regarded as underground palaces made of diamonds, gems or crystal out of which rose nymphs, sirens, fairies or witches, but which also lured humans to their deaths. They could then acquire the terrifying significance of paradisaal mirages. They symbolize the creation of the overwrought imagination.”¹⁰⁴

Since the lake was so full of light, I have looked up the word light as well.

Light is generally related to spiritual purity and the gods. In ancient greek mythology, phoebus appollo was the god of light as well as of reason, harmony and morality, all of which are positive attributes associated with illumination. In Christian symbolism, light is the love and wisdom radiating from God; invisible in itself, it enables all other things to be seen.

In the this story I believe the lake first of all is connected with a heavenly image that is too powerful for a human being, and that’s why the hero falls asleep. In many before-death experiences, a tunnel of light is described and the lake could again be an image of a passage to another realm.

Urashima becomes a crane at the end of the story, and the crane symbolize long life in Japan and in China; “cranes are an attribute of Shouxing, the Chinese god of long life (Fukurokuju in Japan). Because they return once a year, cranes also symbolize spring and regeneration.”¹⁰⁵

It is interesting how the fleeting is connected with the cycle of life, death and rebirth, while in a way the cycle’s continual repetitions also represent eternity.

In the book *Det Norske Folkeeventyret*, Ørnulf Hodne has analyzed *Friends in life and death* and he cites a passage from the Book of the Psalms, Psalm 90 (King James translation)

¹⁰⁴ (Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *The Penguin Dictionary of symbols* 1996 585)

¹⁰⁵ (Rowena and Rupert Shepherd *1000 Symbols* 2002. Page 198)

Thou turnest man to destruction;
And sayest, Return, ye children of men.
For a thousand years in thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.¹⁰⁶

Differences

Characters and their attributes

The two fairytales are about the big questions concerning life and death, time and eternity. They have a lot in common, but what are the differences and how do the characters and their attributes reflect the time, place and culture where they are collected? I will start with the landscape. Japan is an island, and the story reflects fishing traditions, and also a myth connected to the Dragon King's palace under the sea. Many other traditional stories are connected with that myth in Japan. It is also interesting that dragons are often considered dangerous and evil in the West, but they are bringers of luck in the East.

In my view, the part of the Norwegian story that reflects the landscape is the lake in the underworld. The reason why I find it important, is that in the deep forests in inland Norway there are many lakes, and a great many old folk beliefs are connected to the lakes, for instance, stories about the elves and also the spirit called 'Nøkken' (who is a bit similar to the Japanese spirit Kappa). The spirits often reflected the border between the safe and the dangerous, since lakes are places that can represent danger of drowning. Many of the fairytales reflect old beliefs. But hand in hand with Christianity and later modern science, the old folk beliefs represented superstition and have gradually been changed and tried eradicated. Throughout the years many traditions that were considered superstitious were changed to serve the Christian beliefs better.

The relation to religion in Japan and Norway is also different in the sense that in Japan it is natural that several religions exist side by side, and the relation between the old beliefs connected with Shinto and the newer, imported concepts connected with Buddhism, were not necessarily opposites or a threat to each other. In Norway and Europe there have

¹⁰⁶ (Ørnulf Hodne Det Norske Folkeeventyret 1998. Page 184)

been active attempts to remove old beliefs which were considered superstition and to superimpose Christian tradition on the old traditions.

An example of this is actually the fairytale Friends in life and death itself. According to Ørnulf Hodne in *Det norske folkeeventyret*, the story of Friends in life and death might be connected with a pagan death ritual, with a worship of the dead and a belief in a material life after death. He describes it as a cultic motif from early medieval time that has gradually been changed and used in the spirit of the Church, until it has become an example in sermons.¹⁰⁷

It says in the end of the story of Urashima that this story might be the origin of the crane and turtle dance at Ise.

Ise Shrine is a Shinto shrine to the goddess Amaterasu omikami, located in the city of Ise in Mie prefecture in Japan. The Shrine, which is actually a shrine complex of over one hundred shrines, can be traced back to year 690 AC as the date when the shrines were first built in their current form. The shrines are mentioned in the annals of the Kojiki (712) and Nihonshoki (720)

At exorbitant expense, the old shrines are dismantled and new ones built to exacting specifications every 20 years, so that the buildings will be forever new and forever ancient and original.¹⁰⁸

The mirror that Urashima finds in the last tier in the box that he got from the princess, might have connections to the Sacred Mirror that is kept in Ise; the place where it is kept is considered Shinto's holiest and most important site.

A cultural difference between Norway and Japan is connected to the fact that a holy place, such as the Shrine of Ise, connected to the myths are still alive today. In Norway the connections to old myths and folk beliefs have much less impact on our culture compared to their relevance in Japan.

The fact that the dead friend is invited to a celebration connects the fairytale of Friends in life and death to traditional legends and ritual actions from pagan cults. Traces of these old customs can also be seen today in customs connected to graves.¹⁰⁹ They exist, but mostly as traces.

¹⁰⁷ (Ørnulf Hodne. Jørgen Moe og folkeeventyrene 1979. Page 183)

¹⁰⁸ (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Shrine_of_Ise.04.09.07)

¹⁰⁹ (Ørnulf Hodne Jørgen Moe og forleeventyrene 1998. Page 84)

A dance called the “crane and turtle dance” is an ancient tradition, but the dance is still performed in Japan on certain occasions. “In the dance, Urashima Taro, in the form of a crane, represents a spirit. In the guise of a turtle, the Princess of the Dragon shrine at the bottom of the sea also represents a different kind of spirit. These two spirits meet and join together and the dance of the crane and the turtle begins. In Japan, the crane and the turtle often show up as a pair, especially at happy events.”¹¹⁰

The cultural differences connected to the two fairytales show how, in many ways, the ancient culture and deepest roots of Japanese culture are somehow more ‘alive’ and present in contemporary Japan. In Norway, the same cultural roots that the folklorists in the period of the Romantics considered the essence of Norwegian-ness, are present today, but they have less significance. However, if we, for example, compare Norway to Sweden, the Norwegian folk culture is stronger and has been preserved much better, since the folk culture in Sweden has never been used to define identity.

How have the fairytales been used?

Identity and moral

It is difficult to define what the moral is in the story of Urashima Taro. There are other versions of the story of Urashima Taro where Urashima saves a turtle from some kids who are hurting it. The turtle he saves is no other than the Princess from the Dragon Palace. That an otherworld spirit is transformed into an animal, and can take human shape as well, is a theme that is recurrent in Japanese fairytales. In the version where Urashima saves a turtle from attack by ruthless children, it is easier to grasp the moral since it is connected to compassion for an animal.

In the interpretation of this story I find the word identity more easily connects to the Meiji-ideology. The identity is connected to Japans relation to the rest of the world, both from ancient traditions and in Meiji-period. In the modernization process, a lot of science, technology and political ideas from the west were adopted. This use of Western science required many journeys to, among other places, Europe. I find it interesting to link Urashima’s journey to another world to a Japanese tradition. The “other worlds” of

¹¹⁰ (http://i-debut.org/journal/j_disp.asp?code=936 04.09.07)

Japanese mythology often double as foreign countries in Japanese literature. Since the Meiji Era, Japanese scholars have attempted to connect these fairylands with known foreign geography. Yanagita equated Nenokuni with another place name in early literature, Tokoyonokuni, “Eternal Land”, and both are often portrayed as submarine or subterranean underworlds as well as foreign countries.

Another story is connected to Emperor Suinin, where a man named Tajima Mori ventured to Tokoyonokuni and, when he returned in the first year of Emperor Keiko’s reign, brought back the Tachibana or mandarin orange tree.¹¹¹

I find this a very interesting connection to the way the Japanese used knowledge from the West, connecting it to journeys to other worlds to bring back new knowledge. Another phenomenon connected to Japanese identity is the concept that after three years in a foreign country, it is difficult for someone Japanese to return to Japan.

“It is extremely difficult for one who once has been to “another world” to return to the same life as before (even for Japanese students and businessmen today who return from foreign countries!)”¹¹²

It is interesting how ‘other-worlds’ such as the world under the sea, are connected to other countries as well.

“...for Japanese the wall between this world and the other wall is, by comparison a surprisingly thin one. That the membrane between inner and outer or this and that world is paper-thin – like a fusuma (sliding room-divider) or shoji (a paper door-window)”¹¹³

Kawai explains that the Japanese ego is different from the Western ego.

...the Western ego clearly distinguishes between conscious and unconscious and between I and thou – grasping things objectively. In comparison, Japanese consciousness tries to grasp the whole as an undifferentiated state by always making borders vague. This permeability may explain why Japanese fairy tales are closer to legends (a kinship Western folklorists often point out).¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ (<http://sambali.blogspot.com/2006/12/japanese-fairy-lands-article.html> Read: 04.11.07)

¹¹² (Hayao Kawai The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan 1996. Page 102)

¹¹³ (Hayao Kawai The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan 1996. Page 103)

¹¹⁴ (Hayao Kawai The Japanese psyche, Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan 1996. Page 103-104)

If the story of Urashima somehow unveils a part of Japanese identity that is different from Western identity, this difference is also visible through parts of the ideology process. One example is the dual role of the Emperor as a modern monarch and a living god. It is important to emphasize that the relation to the mythological past of Shinto and Japan's mythological creation, was something that the Meiji-ideologist re-used; it had elements that already existed, but they were used in a new connection.

All through the Meiji-period it was important to define an identity that was different from the rest of the world, especially from Chinese and Western identity. In this process the Shinto rituals was strengthened because they represented indigenous Japanese history, as opposed to Buddhism. The relation between Shinto and Buddhism was changed in that earlier they were much closer, and rituals could take place in the same shrines. However, under the Meiji-period a great effort was made to separate them, and Buddhism continued to be a religion, whereas Shinto turned into rituals of the state. The Shinto rituals also directly supported the Emperors role and the part that was connected to the deep roots of Japans myhtological past.

What is culture? What is history? It is an interaction between the universal and the specific and the journey of Urashima can work as a symbol of the journey from one world to another and back, to find new inspiration and internalize it.

Conclusion

The analysis of the fairytales shows that there are many layers to a fairytale. I have worked with a model where I have, through comparison, looked at three different layers. These layers are connected to universality, possible symbolic interpretations and cultural differences.

Universality:

To reveal different layers in the stories, I have used key words, and the key words in the universal analysis are *structure* and *action*. The structure is connected to Propp's functions and it reveals similarities through what kind of actions is committed and how similar they are in a pair of fairytales. The structure of the stories is in a way composed by all the actions committed by the characters, and this is what reveals the patterns of the stories. Another structure that is useful to show the morphology of the fairytale, is the structure of the initiation rite; *separation – initiation – return*, which is also connected to the positive message of the fairytale.

“The folktale is perhaps really something like “a lighthearted doublet of myth and initiation rite.”¹¹⁵

In my six fairytales, four of them corresponded with the initiation rite, while two of them I connected to another type of myth, which is the archetype of the *puer aeternus*, the boy who stays forever young. The initiation rite is closely connected to the protagonist journey, (the hero who comes in terms with everything that he encounters) and the happy ending of the fairytales, where the hero enters the next stage in life, connected to a grown up life (marriage, taking care of parents etc.). The fairytales which corresponded to the initiation rite also corresponded to the structure of Propp's morphology – while the fairytales which corresponded to the *puer aeternus* myth were structurally different. They were both structurally different and the message was different. The positive message that is typical in fairytales, was not present. (The positive message in short: the journey, encounter with danger and difficult tasks, finding help and strength before returning home.) This shows a connection between the structure and the message.

¹¹⁵ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale 1982. Page 116)

When the stories are stripped down to the bare bones of the storyline, it becomes visible how they thematically deal with similar questions. Could for instance the story of Mamesuke be placed in the future? A couple gets a child the size of a bean and he has to travel out into the world to find work; he finds work, he falls in love and brings the girl home by a trick, etc. The core of the stories might be called timeless. The elements in the stories that connect them in time and to a specific culture are mainly visible through the characters and their attributes, landscape, clothes, surroundings manners etc.

"Ti sed og skikk forandres meget, alt som tiderne lider ... Men Menneskenes hjerter forandres aldeles intet i alle dager.

Sigrid Undset

The quote above is from a famous Norwegian author and it states that, although customs and manners change a lot as time passes by, still the human heart remains the same.

The structure and actions in the stories are connected to the message and how the fairytales deal with the most important themes of human existence. Lüthi describes the special style of the folktale; that the plot, the characters and even the material objects of a folktale are created in a special style that he calls "one-dimensional" and "abstract." "Elements of real life are sublimated, "emptied of their substance," to form an enchanted world of pure transparency. As Lüthi demonstrates, the folktale, by its very distance from reality, can play upon the most important themes of human existence."¹¹⁶

In a sense this world of pure transparency can be connected to an emotional language that is universal. Emotions like love and hate, greed and gratefulness, betrayal and jealousy, trust and courage, good intentions and bad intentions are basically the same everywhere. The structure and the message of the fairytales speak, in a way, in an emotional language that is connected to the symbolic language of dreams.

The symbolic interpretation:

In between the similarities and the differences, there are the symbol images in the fairytales that can refer both to universal aspects and cultural differences. The symbol

¹¹⁶ (Max Lüthi. The European Folktale 1982. Page 176 – *Library Journal*)

images are connected to the characters and their attributes and the landscape, as it is with the cultural differences. The words that I have looked up in the dictionaries of symbols, are words that connect the two stories in the comparison together. The symbol images shows how fairytales are connected to mythic conception and old worldviews. This is an area where the universal and cultural intersect, but first of all it shows similarities. It shows that in the dreamish landscape of fairytales, there are links to old folkbeliefs and manners, to the past in which the nationbuilders in Japan and Norway were searching for treasures to create a modern national identity.

The symbol images also show how the fairytales are mirrors that reflect a double relation of universality and cultural identity.

Cultural differences:

One may call Japan and Norway different hemispheres, as the two countries are on each side of the globe, and in a sense Norway and Japan are different worlds. In spite of the differences, the fairytales shows that there are similarities connected to the universal parts of the tales. Other similarities are connected to the nation-building process and the folkloristic approach that has marked the collecting of the fairytales.

The intention of collecting and publishing the fairytales was connected to the differences, the part of the tales that showed specific cultural aspects that could formulate the essence of the nation and the national character. The specific cultural aspects refer to time, place, religion, manners, landscape etc. The fairytales reflects Japanese Buddhistic and Shinto tradition, while the Norwegian stories reflect Christianity and old Norse Mythology. The Japanese hero Momotaro reflects the samurai-tradition and shows that military aspects are present in fairytales, which is very rare in the Norwegian tradition.

Other important differences are connected to how Japan transcended from a feudal structure to a modern nation and the fact that Japan before the Meiji-period had limited contact with the rest of the world. The traditions that were mixed with the building of the modern nation, were somehow more alive and had more impact on the society as a whole, than what was the case in Norway. An example of this is the Ise Shrine that is mentioned in the story of Urashima Taro that still exists today and carries links far back.

A paradox in this use of the past is the Emperors role in the modernization. Before the Meiji-period, it was military leaders (the shogunat) that governed the Japanese society. With the restauration of the Emperor, the myths that went all the way to the mythological creation of Japan were revitalised, in the middle of the modernization.

The analysis of the universal part of the fairytales shows that there is a certain type of moral in the stories. Besides the cultural aspects, this moral was also found important in the nation-building process in both countries. That shows that parts of the fairytales that are universal also were used in the identity-building process. In Norway the moral in the stories were used to describe typical Norwegian values, whereas in Japan the moral is among other thing connected loyalty and fialty. The moral in the fairytales also support the phenomena called ie, connected to the family-state with the Emperor as a head of the family.

The fairytales show the differences I have mentioned above and many others. As I see it, the fairytale has a universal core of moral and timelessness. Then there is a layer of possible symbolic interpretations and another layer again of cultural references. The use of the folktales goes through all the layers and into the core of the story, where the story speaks about the unspeakable because of the abstract style.

My analysis shows these different layers, it shows that the fairytales are both universal expressions and that they can represent indigenous parts of the culture where they were collected. They have been used as a part of a process where the past legitimates ideas of nationality in the present.

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